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SOCIALISM IS THE FUTURE... BUILD IT NOW

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INSIDE: Will the ANC sell out workers?
Our socialism: the Brazilian Workers Party

The African Communist

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Unity of the Left

Neo-liberal ideas have dominated the air-waves for the last decade. The collapse in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union seemed to come as a crowning confirmation of the wisdom of the free-marketeers, of Thatcherist slashing of the public sector, and of what George Bush christened as "the new world order".

But the neo-liberal world order has not fulfilled its own expectations.

In Somalia it increasingly looks like the old world order as US helicopter gunships fire into a crowded city in the name of "famine relief". In Yeltsin's Moscow the moral pretences of Western "democratisation" have been exposed in all their cynicism. In Poland, voters have swung against the neo-liberal free-marketeers. In South and Central America the austerity programmes (for the poor) and the corruption of the political elites (gobbling up chunks of privatised industry) are being increasingly challenged at the popular level. In Africa, as even the World Bank is now beginning to admit, structural adjustment programmes have proved to be a massive failure.

Capitalism, despite its power, despite its temporary victories, is incapable of being a consistent champion of democracy and justice. Indeed, it is the root cause of much of the oppression and injustice of the world.

But an effective challenge to the neo-liberal world "order" requires a coherent alternative. Unless there is a powerful alternative vision, the world of the multinationals will seem irresistible, and cynicism, demoralisation, opportunism and individualism will be the order of the day.

How do we build such an alternative?

In the first place, the left needs to be unified. Unifying the left, as Langa Zita argues in this issue, is less about theoretical debates on the merits of different left traditions, and much more about building unity in action and providing programmatic direction to the broad mass movement. In South Africa we have many advantages in this regard. Decades of popular struggle against apartheid have mobilised a large mass movement. It is a movement that is not easily going to be bought off with neo-liberal promises of a trickle down in some

distant future, if only people will tighten their belts now. In South Africa, the prime task of a united left platform will be to ensure that national democratic transformation is deep-rooted and that it is carried through to its fullest conclusions.

In seeking to build the unity of the left in our country, there are also many useful contemporary experiments to which we can turn. While no country or continent is the same, there is much that we can learn from other places. The similarities, challenges and debates within the left of Latin and Central America are especially relevant to us. In this issue of The African Communist we include articles on the Workers' Party in Brazil and on present developments in Nicaragua.

We also publish the Declaration of the fourth meeting of the Sao Paulo Forum of progressive formations from Latin America and the Caribbean. This Forum, launched four years ago in Sao Paulo, Brazil, groups together over one hundred communist, socialist, left and social democratic parties, national liberation movements and movements for the rights of oppressed minorities, for women's rights and for the protection of the environment. The Sao Paulo Forum is a model for a broad left unity that we might seek to build within South Africa, and indeed within our southern African region. In essence, it is a broad-based and pluralistic platform whose essential feature is its opposition to the neo-liberalism of the "new world order".

The left cannot just be an opposition, awaiting its time in some distant future. The left must also be a force for practical reconstruction

Left unity is critical, but we need more than a unity based around a broad alternative vision. In our own South African debates, just as much as in Nicaragua, Brazil or in the Sao Paulo Forum, there is another common theme. We will not win the battle against neo-liberalism and against the crisis into which the majority of the world's population is plunged, unless we are able to pose concrete, specific and implementable alternatives.

The left cannot just be an opposition, awaiting its time in some distant future. The left must also be a force for practical reconstruction. This means, amongst other things, that we have to develop our technical capacities in a very wide range of areas — the environment, or local government, or civil engineering. We have to unleash the energies and frustrated progressive aspirations of

thousands of professionals, they must be won over to the Left platform.

But, at the end of the day, our perspectives and programmes must be rooted in the concerns of the oppressed majority. Our programmes must begin, even in the midst of the capitalist order, to build houses, provide education and free health care, to create jobs. The present tripartite Reconstruction Programme, which is in the process of being elaborated, is crucial in this regard. To broaden the debate and discussion around this area, we have published the 4th draft of the programme.

Are we reforming capitalism? Yes, in a sense we are, but not with the intention of rescuing it, or giving it a better name. In the reforms that we seek to implement, we must continually seek to deepen the people's capacity to make socialism. In our concrete programme we must continually challenge the logic of capitalism, of the "free market", of profits above social needs. We must increasingly take whole sectors of our society — housing, education, health-care, infrastructure — away from the play of alienated market forces. These social needs must be increasingly decommodified.

It is this challenge that Charles Nqakula begins to address in his speech to the COSATU Special Congress which we also publish in this issue. It is this challenge that he captures in the slogan : "Socialism is the future, build it now."

In other words, let us uphold the vision, but let us also engage effectively, as socialists, with the present.

Affirmative action – time for a class approach

What is affirmative action? In most people's minds affirmative action has come to mean the promotion of individuals — usually blacks, more specifically Africans — into managerial posts and into share-holding. It is about individual blacks "getting a slice of the action", the capitalist action, that is.

The SACP thoroughly rejects this approach to affirmative action.

Affirmative action should be seen primarily as the empowerment of social groups, sectors and classes which have been historically oppressed. It is primarily about collective empowerment, not the promotion of individuals.

Affirmative action is about extending roads and electricity to marginalised rural communities. It is about developing an extensive, state-run primary health network, and introducing a free, compulsory ten years of education to all children in our country. Affirmative action is about giving all old people an equal and living pension. Affirmative action is a massive programme of job creation for the millions of unemployed in our country. It is about empowering women through adult education and the provision of creches. It is about giving workers increasing powers over decision-making on the shop-floor.

Once you speak of affirmative action in this way, you are on the right track. Notice that you are then underlining not just racial oppression, but also class oppression, gender oppression and the massive inequalities between rural and urban areas.

Affirmative action, in this sense, understands that overcoming decades of racial, class and gender oppression will not be ended simply by formal rights, by constitutional equality for all South Africans. Nor will these things be ended simply by creating a new

middle class of blacks. The active and purposeful engagement of a democratic state and of progressive formations in civil society is essential — **affirmative action**, precisely, and not just formal change or cosmetic promotions is required to overcome the legacy of oppression.

The struggle for this kind of perspective on affirmative action has become more necessary than ever before. The character and strategic direction of the ANC-led liberation alliance is, to some extent, at stake.

Consider this recent report in *The Star*: "ANC Youth League president Peter Mokaba and his business associates are bidding fiercely to buy into the cellular phone service provider industry, but he is facing aggressive competition from other black business interests." (October 26, 1993). This reported bid follows an agreement struck between the ANC, the Pretoria regime and the two companies involved in cellular phones prescribing minimum stakes for black business in the industry.

At the time of going to press *The African Communist* is not certain of the accuracy of this report. Comrade Peter Mokaba has certainly been the target of some extremely negative and biased press reporting in the past. But the above story is not hostile in tone, and it follows a similar report in which Mokaba is quoted as saying that the ANC Youth League should acquire a stake in the cellular phone business "in order to make the Youth League financially independent of the ANC." (October 22).

Is financial dependence on the ANC worse than financial dependence on the profitability of the cellular phone business — a technology which the alliance has said is elitist and ill-suited to the needs of our country? Most progressive formations try to build financial independence by relying on their organised base. Is that no longer valid? Are Mokaba's "business associates" referred to in *The Star* other Youth Leaguers acting on behalf of the Youth League, or are they simply aspirant entrepreneurs?

There are many questions that arise, but we do not wish to pursue them here. As we have said, we are not even sure of the accuracy of all the reports.

The purpose of raising these issues here is not to point fingers at individuals, but rather to raise alarm bells. There are many sad examples in the rest of our continent, where heroic national liberation struggles have been undermined by leaders using political power for self-enrichment purposes.

We have said in the past that the imperialists and the local ruling bloc, having failed to smash the ANC, now have as their prime objective the transformation of the ANC. A key component of this strategy is,

precisely, to transform leadership elements into a bureaucratic bourgeois stratum by giving them "a slice of the action". This is a stratum that in its life-styles, outlook and aspirations becomes increasingly dependent on the big corporations, and increasingly remote from the popular masses.

The path to advancement for this bureaucratic stratum is precisely its political power and erstwhile popularity. Power is cashed in for economic rewards. We have, in the recent past, talked about the dangers of a tap-on tap-off approach to mass mobilisation and the negotiation process. We are now, perhaps, witnessing an even more dangerous and cynical tap-on tap-off manipulation of popular forces. Mass mobilisation is turned on in order to improve the economic bidding hand of a political elite.

We cannot allow this to happen here.

We are not saying that a gender-sensitive, working class biased collective programme of affirmative action will not also involve the promotion of thousands of blacks and women in the civil service, in the army and police, in government, in the economy. Clearly the removal of formal race discrimination will open up more opportunities for black business-people.

To have effective democratisation and reconstruction, we will need a civil service, for instance, that speaks the language of our people, that is rooted among the people. This will certainly require a massive programme of black promotions to displace many ill-qualified, backward and generally ill-suited white males who dominate the service presently. But the promotion of blacks, of women, of workers must, at all times, be subordinated to the broader tasks of collective reconstruction and development.

We must never allow ourselves to confuse the advancement of a new middle stratum with the totality of national liberation. In eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, socialism collapsed because the party and state increasingly **substituted** for the class they claimed to represent. In much of Africa the national liberation project is in crisis because a black bureaucratic bourgeois stratum has **substituted** its individual advancement for that of the oppressed majority. The ANC-led alliance's prime vocation must remain with the great majority, the workers and the poor.

We want collective empowerment, not the individual enrichment of a small band of black yuppies.

Will the ANC sell-out workers?

ANC President, Nelson Mandela delivered an opening address to the September COSATU Special Congress. Having completed his prepared speech, comrade Mandela put aside his notes and spoke directly and spontaneously to the 1 700 worker delegates. He asked a question that was uppermost in the minds of many.

COMRADES, I would like to make one more remark.

I fully believe the ANC will never betray the cause of democracy, the cause of the workers. We have a track record in which we have worked closely with workers' movements. But your defence is not just the ANC, it is you, the workers yourselves. It is you who must take the defence of your rights, your aspirations in your own hands.

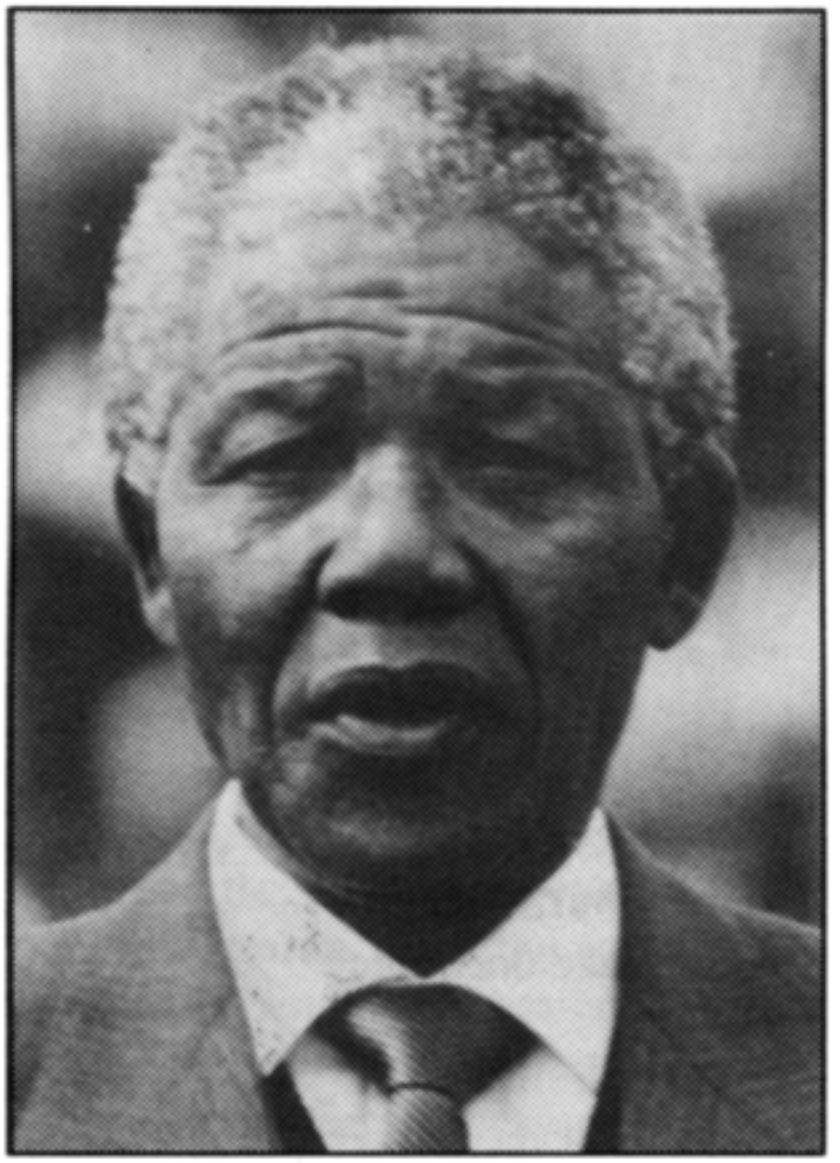
How many times has the liberation movement worked together with workers, and at the moment of victory betrayed the workers? There are many examples of that in the world... (prolonged applause)

It is only if the workers strengthen their organisation before and after liberation... (applause) ...if you relax your vigilance, you will find that your sacrifices have been in vain.

You must support the African National Congress only so far as it delivers the goods, if the ANC government does not deliver the goods, you must do to it what you have done to the apartheid regime (prolonged applause, and shouts of

"If the ANC government does not deliver the goods, you must do to it what you have done to the apartheid regime..."

Nelson Mandela



Pic: Cecil Sols, DYNAMIC IMAGES

"Buwa! Buwa!").

The South African Communist Party, as well, must not be complacent. I do not think we will ever betray the South African Communist Party. It has been our ally for more than 70 years, we have fought and suffered together, our comrades have died together. Many of them remained in the battlefield and never returned. I don't think with such a tradition, with such a background, it is possible for the ANC ever to betray the South African Communist Party... (applause)

But, it will be foolhardy for the South African Communist Party to become complacent and to rely exclusively on the bone fides of the ANC.

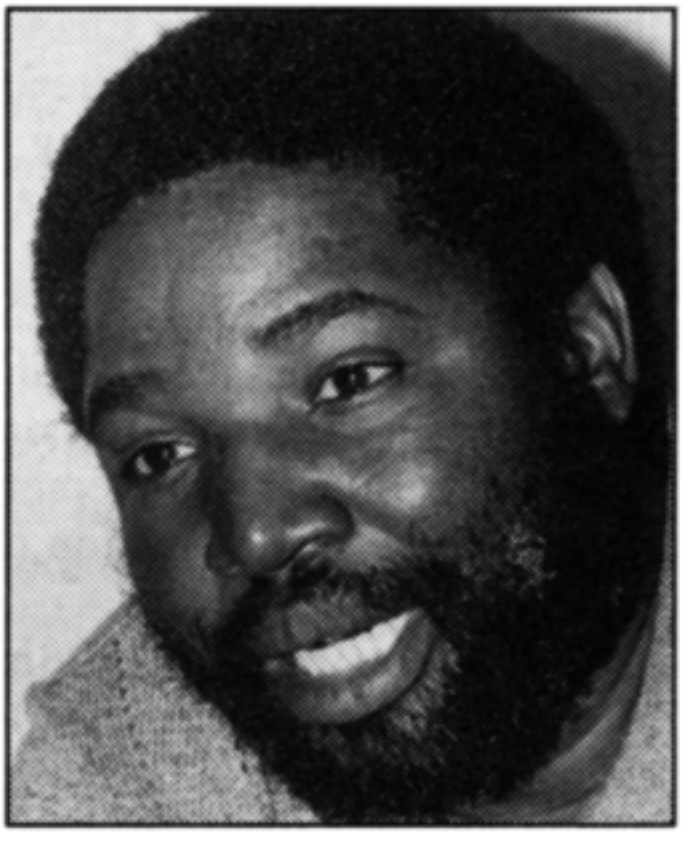
Who ever knew that the Soviet Union would disappear? Who ever knew that the eastern democracies would disappear from the scene, and become something totally different from a socialist society? That is an experience which requires the SACP and its leadership not to be complacent.

It is only if all the partners of the tripartite alliance take the defence of democracy in their own hands and co-operate with the broad democratic movement in that capacity.

This alliance is here to stay... (applause). It is this alliance, and not De Klerk, it is this alliance that is going to liberate you, and that is why we must prepare very, very efficiently, very effectively for the 27th of April, and make it in theory and in practice the day of liberation.

Thank you.

Socialism is the future... build it now



Address by

Charles Nqakula

to COSATU

Special Congress,

Soweto,

September 1993

A very significant event took place here yesterday morning. It came towards the end of Comrade Madiba's input, when he put aside his prepared speech and spoke to us directly. Suddenly, there was electricity in the air.

I don't want to repeat what Comrade Madiba said so well, I want to make an observation. It is an observation I want to address, not so much to COSATU, but to the ANC.

In his closing remarks, Comrade Madiba found our ears, but something else was also found. When the ANC speaks to workers, when the ANC addresses itself to the concerns of workers, then the ANC finds its **own** feet, its **own** vocation. It stops being the ANC just of the World Trade Centre, the ANC of the carefully worded diplomatic statement, the ANC balancing on an awkward policy matter in front of the TV cameras.

I am not saying the ANC shouldn't be at the World Trade Centre, or that it doesn't have to be diplomatic at times, or that it should only concern itself with workers.

But an ANC that remembers its working class origins, becomes, again, the ANC of the Defiance Campaign,

the ANC of the Freedom Charter, the ANC of the Morogoro Conference, the ANC that ordinary working class people have built in struggle over many decades. It becomes the ANC that will win the forthcoming elections. It becomes the ANC that we will need in the years to come, a nationally unifying movement, to spearhead the reconstruction of our country.

The electricity in Comrade Madiba's closing remarks is a lesson not so much for COSATU but for the ANC leadership itself. To forget the workers, is to forget what the ANC itself is all about.

Giving democracy content

This is no routine congress, the times are not routine.

The formal outline for political democracy is beginning to emerge in our country. But when it comes to the **content** of that democracy, everything remains at stake.

The neo-liberals in our society tell us that we must not "overburden" democracy with too many popular expectations. They tell us that democracy is simply elections, every four or five years, within a multi-party system.

Now we, on the Left, don't underestimate the significance of winning this basic demand – one-person one-vote. We fought for it. It wasn't bestowed on us by the National Party. Nor by the Democratic Party (those monopolisers of property and education) who, until recently, were calling for a qualified franchise, that is, a right to vote only for those with property and education.

We say to the neo-liberals, democracy is much more than periodic one-person, one-vote elections. Democracy is about the empowerment of the people. It is about jobs, houses, electricity, running water, decent health care, free education, the emancipation of women.

That is why this Special Congress and the agenda items later in the morning are so critical. This Congress must be a major event in consolidating our strategic direction from a Left, working class, democratic perspective.

Reconstruction Programme

It is here, of course, that the Reconstruction Programme is central. The idea of a Reconstruction Programme was first pioneered in COSATU, and it is now in the process of elaboration within the Tripartite Alliance.

The programme is and must be the programme of the national liberation movement, its allies and the broadest mass democratic movement. It is a programme of national democratic transformation. It is a programme for the implementation of the Freedom

Charter.

Reconstructing the State

In some of the early discussions on a Reconstruction Programme, the SACP was concerned about a tendency to focus **only** on the socio-economic dimension of reconstruction. This dimension is critical. But we need, in looking at reconstruction, also to consider every dimension of our crisis-ridden society. In particular, I want to underline here the need for a thorough-going reconstruction of the state itself.

The Civil Service

In the first place, there is the **civil service**. In its upper echelons that civil service is overwhelmingly white, male, often corrupt and grossly overpaid. Directors general earn as much as R250,000 (one quarter of a million) a year. At the bottom end, the civil service is overwhelmingly black, and it is paid starvation wages in schools, in hospitals, in municipalities.

The civil service must be thoroughly reconstructed. The salaries of those at the top must be slashed. The wages of those below must be raised drastically. The civil service must become what its name says: a SERVICE. It must understand the aspirations of the majority of our people. It must be answerable to democratically elected structures.

A progressive policy of affirmative action promotions will help to reconstruct the civil service. Affirmative action must promote thousands and thousands of blacks, women and working class people into positions of authority.

But, at the end of the day, the civil service is going to be reconstructed, not so much by affirmative action at the top, but rather more from the bottom. And that means that all those in the public sector must be empowered. COSATU's proposed single Public Sector Union assumes special importance here. All public sector workers must enjoy full trade union rights.

The security forces

Then there is the police and army. Here we confront very difficult problems.

The majority of the SAP is now black, but its upper ranks are still monopolised by white males. It is a police force that is lacking in all legitimacy. It has to be transformed in every way.

We need a single national police service (let's call it a **service**, not a force). There must be an end to KZPs and other private armies. But this single national police service must be answerable to the communities it serves. Policing priorities must be determined in constant consultation

with communities.

The transformation of the police is going to have to come largely from below. All police must be free to join unions. Let us, at this Congress, resolve to support much more actively the just struggles of POPCRU. Instead of dismissing patriotic policemen who have tried to be real policemen (that is, defend their communities), De Klerk should deal with the real thugs still lurking in his security forces.

As far as the army is concerned, the process of integrating armed formations (which will begin partially in the coming months in a National Peace Keeping Force) is an important step.

But we need to be realistic and honest. The present SADF has some half a million, mainly white males either in the permanent force or in reserve. The combined strengths of MK, the Transkei Defence Force and other patriotic forces is a fraction of this.

The process of transforming the army and demilitarising our society will be a complex struggle, both from within and from outside of the security forces. The transformation of the army needs to be a central component of our Reconstruction Programme. And its transformation must be the concern of all us, not just the monopoly of MK.

A future parliament and electoral system

There are many other aspects of the state that need reconstructing. The present parliament is a gravey-train. The SACP believes that, in the future, MPs should receive more modest salaries, and all the perks they receive must be cut. To be an elected representative is an honour and a responsibility – not a self-enrichment opportunity.

For the purposes of the forthcoming elections we have chosen a Proportional Representation system. This was the right choice. We could have spent the next 6 years at the World Trade Centre haggling about the delimitation of non-racial constituencies. Much better, for now, to have a single national list and regional lists.

But the danger with Proportional Representation is that those elected don't feel themselves answerable to a particular constituency. An even greater danger is that the national list starts to become an affair of political elites. Who gets on to a list is brokered in head offices. We need to guard against that danger in the future.

The people shall govern

Reconstructing the state needs to be a central concern of all workers. That reconstruction needs to come from the top and from below, **within** the state. But it also needs to come from

outside.

When we speak, correctly, of the ANC as the future government, we tend to make the mistake of thinking that the ANC will be nothing but the state. In fact, the ANC needs to remain, also, a massive, grass-rooted, extra-parliamentary liberation movement. The reconstruction of the state in coming years, will need an ANC outside as much as inside of government.

Reconstructing the state will also be a critical role of numerous mass based sectoral organisations, of which COSATU is, undoubtedly, the most important.

Build Socialism

So far I have not mentioned a particular word. Someone, I am sure, is going to point this out. That word is "socialism". But, rest assured, everything I have said so far is intimately connected to the question of socialism.

Comrade Chris Hani liked to say that socialism is not a foreign country, it is part of what we are building right here. Socialism is not a separate continent from the national democratic revolution, from the effort to reconstruct and develop our country.

To deepen, consolidate and defend democracy in our country means advancing to socialism. In the past few years the SACP has been using the slogan: "The Future is Socialism".

We have now changed that slogan, or at least we have added to it. "The Future is Socialism – Build it Now!" But what do we mean by beginning to build it now?

We mean that in the election campaign, in the reconstruction programme, in our day-to-day struggles we must be building momentum towards socialism, capacity for socialism and even elements of socialism.

We must increasingly displace the political economy of the bosses, of property, of privilege with the political economy of the working class. A workers' political economy is production for needs, not for profits. A workers' political economy is for a society of empowered citizens, where the majority are not just units of labour and, at best, consumers of services. Workers are people.

We must increasingly displace the morality of the market-place and the stock-exchange, with a working class morality. Our morality is not one of dog-eats-dog, of self-enrichment. Our's is a morality of collective struggle, of shared responsibilities, of solidarity.

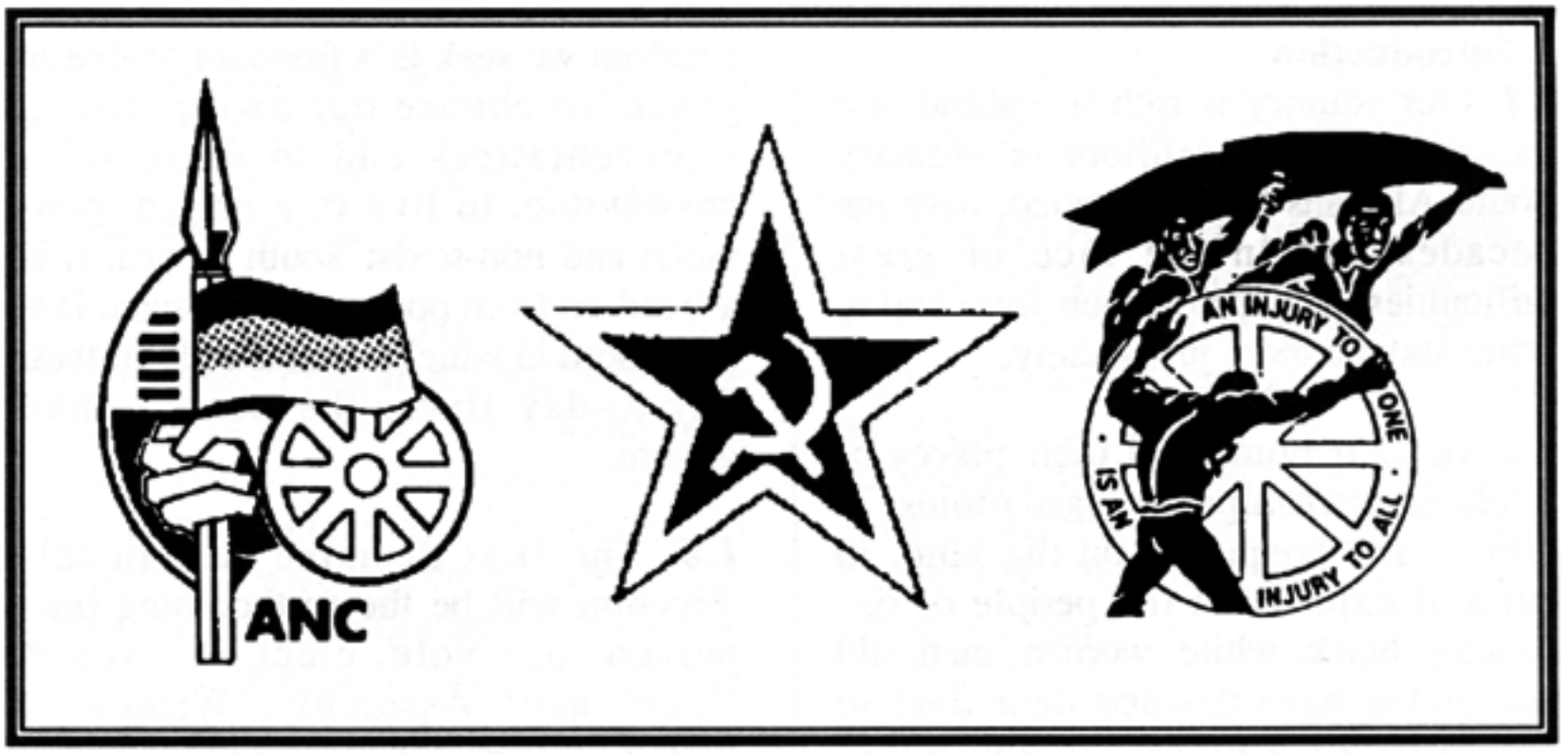
We have called for an end to unilateral restructuring. Now we must increasingly implement an end to all unilateralisms, not just unilateral restructuring, but unilateral ownership,

unilateral management, all unilateral power and privilege vested in a minority class.

The reconstruction programme must chart a path to thorough-going democracy in South Africa. In deepening democracy, we shall be advancing to socialism. In advancing to socialism, we must constantly democratise.

Long live that great fighter for the workers and the poor – Comrade Chris Hani, long live!

Socialism is the future ...build it now! ☭



TRIPARTITE ALLIANCE

Reconstruction and Development Programme

(Fourth Draft)*

**** This draft reflects the amendments suggested at the Alliance Summit on 20—21 August 1993. As we go to print, the reconstruction programme is being revised and debated. In the interests of stimulating the debate, we reprint the latest draft***

RECONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME

1. Introduction

1.1. Our country is rich in natural and human resources. Millions of ordinary South Africans have struggled, over the decades and in the face of great difficulties, to improve their lives and to bring about a more just society.

1.2. In their homes, in their places of work, in townships, in class-rooms, in clinics and hospitals, on the land, in cultural expression the people of our country, black, white, women, men, old and young have devoted their lives to the cause of a more humane South Africa. This collective heritage, these common yearnings are our greatest asset.

Yet, today, South Africa lies in ruins.

1.3. In every sphere – economic, social, political, moral, cultural – there are deep-seated crises. There is not a single sector of our country that has remained untouched by the ravages of apartheid.

1.4. The challenges facing us are enormous. There can be no piecemeal solutions, no half-hearted measures. Only a comprehensive approach to harnessing the resources of our country can reverse the crisis. Only an all-round effort to inspan the life experience, skills, energies and aspirations of our people can lay the basis for a new South Africa.

1.5. Our Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) will guide us from apartheid to freedom. The freedom we seek is a freedom to live in peace, to choose our own political representatives and to make them answerable, to live in a united, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa. It is a freedom from poverty and hunger. It is a freedom in which, increasingly in their day-to-day lives, the people shall govern.

1.6. The first decisive step in this direction will be the forthcoming one-person one-vote elections for a Constituent Assembly. Without a decisive victory for democratic forces in these elections, the prospects for effective reconstruction and development will be limited. An election victory is imperative.

1.7. But an election victory is only a first step. No political democracy can survive and flourish if the mass of our people remain in poverty, without jobs, without land, without tangible prospects for a better life. A thorough-going democratisation and reconstruction of administrative structures, of the police and army, of the economy, of our society in general is essential.

1.8. Our Reconstruction and Development Programme is not a simple collection of demands. Still less is it a list of election promises. The RDP is a coherent and implementable programme. It is a plan that will integrate our policies and set out clearly defined targets within achievable time-frames. Reconstruction will be realised

within the context of macro-economic stability. All of this can only happen if the new democratic state plays an active developmental role.

1.9. Our Reconstruction and Development Programme will introduce a new form of governance which will be qualitatively different from that which characterised the apartheid system. It will be one in which our people and their organisations will be involved in and will take responsibility for planning, prioritisation and implementation.

1.10. In the transitional context of a multi-party government of national unity, a coherent Reconstruction and Development Programme becomes all the more important. Without such a programme, the dangers of inaction or of scattered and hopelessly inadequate measures are great. Inside and outside of government, the maximum unity of purpose of all democratic forces is essential.

1.11. A key objective of the RDP is also to ensure that the transitional state is supported, in the reconstruction project, by the mass based formations and institutions of civil society. All the energies of our people will need to be activated. The RDP must be owned by the majority. It must be a programme, not just for delivery, but above all for participation.

1.12. The consolidation of the RDP requires ongoing discussion and negotiation. It is not a one-off process.

1.13. South Africa, so rich in potential, now lies deeply wounded by apartheid. For as long as it takes to eradicate the legacy of racial oppression, for as long as it takes to move from the past to thorough-going democracy, peace and justice, we must, each of us, dedicate ourselves to the challenge of reconstruction.

1.14. This document is the first step towards a detailed Reconstruction and Development Programme. It provides a basis for further detailed discussion and planning.

2. Democratising the state

2.1. The apartheid state has been structured on racism and repression enforced by a militarised and well resourced security force establishment. The state machinery, its duplicated institutions and bureaucracy have been unaccountable to the majority, unanswerable to even the minority which they were intended to represent, inefficient in delivery and largely corrupt.

2.2. The regime is entrenching the current apartheid bureaucracy. However, to achieve the goals of democracy, justice and economic well-being requires a total and fundamental restructuring of the state, its institutions and bureaucracy.

2.3. There will be an effective, lean, accountable and strong state which is able to implement a coherent reconstruction and development programme from the centre, using all levels of the state to achieve the objectives of the programme.

2.4. The state and its institutions will be restructured to maximise the participation of people. The democratic state will be accessible, responsive and accountable.

Our Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) will guide us from apartheid to freedom. The freedom we seek is a freedom to live in peace, to choose our own political representatives and to make them answerable, to live in a united, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa. It is a freedom from poverty and hunger. It is a freedom in which, increasingly in their day-to-day lives, the people shall govern.

2.5. The new civil service will be structured and composed so that it is capable of implementing the policies of a new democratic government, deliver basic goods and services effectively and efficiently to our people and reflect the composition of South African society in terms of race, gender and class.

2.5.1. To accomplish this task an extensive affirmative action programme with training for those who have been excluded from holding responsible positions in government will be embarked upon. At the same time there will be large scale retraining of those willing to serve in a democratic government.

2.6. All state structures, including local and regional government, will be elected and organised on the basis of direct democracy with a close and consistent accountability to the people.

2.7. The security forces will be transformed from agents of suppression to effective servants of the community. A single police service and a leaner defence force under the supreme authority of the parliament will be established.

2.8. Codes of conduct which spell out what is required for a democratic civil service will be enforced.

2.9. Public sector workers and their unions will be meaningfully involved in decision-making at various levels.

2.10. The Reconstruction Programme requires that public policy formulation will always be a joint effort between the state, trade unions, the civics and other constituencies in civil society.

2.11. The negotiating forums which

have been set up and provide a new approach to policy making will be strengthened and/or restructured. Public funding will be made available for them to function effectively. These forums will not seek to remove the sovereign right of government to govern but will create a higher degree of democratisation in all aspects of public life.

3. Building a new economy

3.1. The South African economy was built on the foundations of colonialism and apartheid. It is heavily dependent on mineral exports and yet it faces an international economy where the prices of these minerals are increasingly declining due to the development of new technologies and new production systems. The import substitution industrialisation strategy has run its course and our dependence on imported technology and intermediate capital goods is a serious impediment to sustainable industrial development.

3.2. The economic growth rates achieved in the 1960s were based on repression, cheap labour, high levels of protection for domestic industry and the expansion of resource exploitation. This industrial sector is seriously out of line with international trends.

3.3. Protection has lead to high costs of production compared to the world market situation and the cheap labour system has lead to the underdevelopment of our human resources and yet new production systems rely heavily on a skilled work force.

3.4. Whilst the economy showed impressive growth rates in the 1960s, it has since 1973 began to experience decline, stagnation and crisis. Investment levels have declined, per capita incomes have fallen, unemployment has reached an unacceptable level of over 46%, our international trade framework leaves much to be desired.

3.5. Our RDP aims at the building of a new sustainable growth and development path which will achieve growth, create jobs, and meet basic needs, redistribute incomes, wealth and economic power within the context of international competitiveness, regional development and co-operation.

3.6. Our RDP requires that the democratic state plays a leading role in guiding the economy and the market toward the achievement of growth and development. The building of the economy will not be the responsibility of the state alone.

3.7. Our programme aims at achieving a dynamic balance between state intervention and active market cooperation. The guiding principle for us is not dogma but the needs of the national economy and our society in which decisions are taken on the basis of the balance of evidence.

3.8. Further, our programme is predicated on the fundamental prerequisite that the democratic state, the trade union movement, business associations and all relevant organs of civil society will always co-operate in the process of policy formulation.

3.9. In order to make an immediate rapid impact on job creation, a national public works programme will be undertaken. It will be community-based and will focus on housing construction, the construction of new basic infrastructure and upgrading of existing ones (i.e. roads and streets, water and sanitation facilities, dams, schools, recreational facilities, etc.). South Africa's vast technological capacity must also be harnessed to ensure access and delivery.

3.10. The public works programme cannot be seen in isolation from the restructuring of the productive sectors of our economy. We want to increase the levels of productive investment, negotiate new industrial policies to allow our economy to be reintegrated into the world economy without continuing to rely on high protective barriers, develop more effective and appropriate technologies and ensure the rapid development of our human resources.

3.11. We will welcome foreign investment as part of our effort to increase our levels of investment in our economy and as a contribution to our RDP. In this regard, we will ensure that international investment rules are based on principles of equality of treatment with domestic investors.

3.12. We will build on the current strengths of our economy and work towards removing all obstacles to growth and prosperity. In order to reduce economic concentration in a few hands, we will do away with monopolies, anti-competitive behaviours (such as price fixing, interlocking directorships, monopoly creating mergers, etc.), and antitrust (competition) policies will be introduced.

3.13. We will also strengthen our economy by developing strategies to encourage the domestic beneficiation and also the creation of a world class mining and mineral processing capital goods industry. At the same time, the legislative process to restore mineral rights to the people will begin. We also aim to develop a small and micro scale mining sector.

3.14. The financial sector plays an important role in our economy. Whilst part of it is highly developed, it has nevertheless failed to channel savings into the most socially and economically productive areas. This system, including banks, contractual savings institutions and the stock exchange, have reflected and reinforced the dualistic character of the South African economy and society.

Black people have been denied sufficient access to credit for housing and business development.

3.15. The RDP will facilitate and encourage the establishment of a financial system more responsive to the needs of lenders and borrowers including low income earners. It will require substantial improvements in the macro-economic, legal and regulatory environment. We will also broaden the range and improve the efficiency of the financial system.

3.16. An important component of this growth and development path is the absolute requirement that we will pursue a living wage policy in all aspects of wage bargaining. Such a policy will be fundamentally linked to skills development, educational and human resources development and an effective and empowering work organisation style.

3.17. The combination of active leadership by the democratic state and the negotiation of policy issues with all affected constituencies will provide a stable, transparent and participatory policy environment which will benefit investors and the economy as a whole.

3.18. Within the Southern Africa context, we will participate fully in bilateral and regional endeavours towards the attainment of the objectives and aims of the OAU, SADC, and the PTA. We will be guided in this by the principle of equity, mutual benefit and co-operation. We will immediately apply for membership of these institutions.

3.19. The combination of policies in this programme will be aimed at ensuring that redistribution, development and growth by combining and reinforcing one another. By so doing, we will involve our people in the democratic reconstruction of our economy for the benefit of all.

4. Attacking poverty and deprivation

4.1. Poverty in South Africa is the direct result of the apartheid system. Poverty affects millions of people, the majority of whom live in the rural areas and are women.

4.2. South Africa can afford to feed, house, educate and treat all its citizens. Yet the system of apartheid has created the gross and unnecessary divisions among us.

4.3. The objectives of our RDP is to eliminate hunger, house all our people, provide water, sanitation and electricity to all, eliminate illiteracy, provide good schooling for children and adult basic education and raise the quality of our health services and make them accessible to all.

4.4. Housing

4.4.1. All citizens of South Africa will have a right to decent housing and with

rules and rights of tenancy or property rights that are transparent and protected in law.

4.4.2. Housing will be provided in an overall development context which will link housing to transport networks, industry, schools, crches, community halls, recreational facilities, etc.

4.4.3. Community participation in and control over housing programmes will be essential for their success.

Pic Elmond Jiyane

Members of POPCRU make their demands known... The objective of the RDP is to address these demands.

4.5. Basic Infrastructure

4.5.1. The implementation of the RDP will require that every urban and rural household will have clean, running water and environmentally safe sanitation and refuse disposal, affordable electricity and access to an affordable telephone.

4.5.2. Schools and clinics and small scale productive units will also have access to such services.

4.5.3. In the interim, before electricity is made available, every household will have access to affordable fuel without endangering the environment.

4.5.4. A clear long term water management policy will be implemented. This will also help to prevent potential disasters following floods or droughts.

4.5.5. New roads will be built, roads upgraded and the transport system restructured. This will alleviate some of the effects of apartheid and ensure access by all to cheap, effective and safe transport.

4.5.6. Sports and recreation facilities will be expanded to provide

opportunities for all, irrespective of age, physical condition, class or gender.

4.6. Health Care

4.6.1. South Africa has excellent resources for health care. If we distribute these resources more evenly and manage them well then everyone in South Africa can have access to good health care.

4.6.2. Key elements to ensure health include household food security, running water, a living wage, education and decent housing. In addition all persons will have access to health care as a basic human right and should be included in a primary health care system.

4.6.3. A comprehensive, equitable and integrated national health service will be created which will include ensuring access to services for all; upgrading rural services; making maximal use of existing advanced health care facilities and creating an appropriate regulatory framework.

4.6.4. The spread of HIV infection and AIDS will have a profound impact on our society and on the RDP. Major resources will therefore be directed to effective AIDS research and prevention.

4.7. Social Welfare

4.7.1. A national social security system will be established. In addition, a social safety net will be established to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable (such as the elderly, the disabled, children, women, the youth and marginalised communities).

4.7.2. Special measures will be designed to respond in a systematic way to the needs of individuals, families and communities who are victims of violence and other traumatic events.

4.8. Environment

4.8.1. Apartheid policies have led to the degradation of our environment. The lack of access to electricity leads to air pollution from coal stoves in our townships and to deforestation in our rural areas. Industries have been allowed to develop hazardous practices which pollute the environment.

4.8.2. These trends will be reversed and effective legislation, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms introduced to create conditions conducive to sustainable development.

4.8.3. Resources will be committed to the rehabilitation and protection of the environment for the sake of ourselves and of future generations of South Africans.

4.9. Land Reform

4.9.1. An accessible and affordable Land Claims Court will be established. The purpose will be to adjudicate competing claims to land. It will allow restoration

to people of land from which they were forcibly removed under apartheid legislation, and it will decide on appropriate compensation.

4.9.2. Agricultural and rural land reform will focus on improving nutrition and household food security and aim at achieving affordable prices for food. It will also allow for redistribution of land to address the problems of landlessness, it will seek to improve the conditions of farm workers and it will provide support for small scale farmers.

4.9.3. Women have long been excluded from equitable access to land and their agricultural labour has often been exploited. A transparent system of land rights will be established. It will include issues of who allocates land and reforms to remove the constraints placed by tribal and customary law on land ownership by women.

4.9.4. Urban land reform will be closely tied to housing policy and it will also deal with compensation for people forcibly removed under the Group Areas Act.

4.10. Rural Development

4.10.1. The apartheid system, particularly its policies of migrant labour and forced removals, has grossly distorted South Africa's rural areas. Family structures and peasant agriculture have been seriously undermined.

4.10.2. Rural development will include the provision of roads, water and sanitation, electricity and telephones, schools and health services. It will promote industrial development and promote small scale agriculture.

4.10.3. The majority of the people in rural areas are women and rural development programmes will be linked to strategies for the empowerment of women.

4.11. Food and basic goods

4.11.1. Access to food and basic goods at affordable prices is essential to address the impact of poverty on the vast majority of the people. Our people cannot be held in poverty by the protected interests of farmers, manufacturers and retailers.

4.11.2. All basic foodstuffs will be exempted from VAT.

5. Human Resources Development

5.1. Apartheid has underskilled, divided and traumatised our people. People who work are usually locked into low skilled and low paying jobs, unable to move since they do not have access to further education and training. The unemployed find themselves without any learning opportunities to help them get or make work.

5.2. Apartheid divided black education from white education and divided

training from general schooling. The effect of these divisions was to entrench the privilege of whites.

5.3. Ending apartheid will not erase these problems. Education and training will be reconstructed to contribute to a more equal and democratic society as well as a growing number of better paying jobs.

5.4. Reconstruction of the education and training system will ensure that:

5.4.1. All children are given a general education for a minimum of 10 years compulsory schooling.

5.4.2. All those who were denied a general education should be given a second chance as an integral part of the reconstruction process.

5.4.3. People who are able are encouraged to continue learning throughout their lives, not only when they are young.

5.4.4. Education and training helps people to participate in their workplace, community and the wider society.

5.4.5. Education and training supports industrial and regional development.

5.4.6. Priority will be given to improving the curriculum, ensuring proper teacher—student ratios for effective teaching and learning, provision of sufficient classrooms and facilities, textbooks and the upgrading of teacher training.

5.4.7. A special focus will be to ensure education of women.

5.5. People will be given opportunities to learn throughout their lives, not just when they are young so that they can get more skills to keep up with changes in society and technology.

5.6. There will be a dynamic link between reconstruction and non-compulsory learning. Human resource development in projects designed to end poverty, create jobs and strengthen industry will not only serve the short term needs of the project, but will lay the basis for further individual and social development. This means that participants will receive general education as well as technical or applied skills.

5.7. One nationally integrated system will ensure that it is possible to progress to higher levels of skill from any starting point. A national qualification and certification system will clearly set out the links between one level and the next.

5.8. There will be formal recognition of the skills and learning which adults have acquired through experience or informal training.

5.9. A funding regime will be established which supports the above objectives, and in particular addresses

areas which were neglected under apartheid. With regard to infrastruc-ture, priority must be given to the optimal use of existing facil-ities – at night, over weekends and during holidays.

5.10. Priority will be given to the upgrading, training and payment of the educator and trainer workforce. Professional recognition will be given to trained personnel who must be involved at every stage of reconstructing the education and training system.

5.11. There will be statutory recognition of the rights of education sector organisations such as teachers unions, parent teachers associations and student representative councils.

We want all our people to live their lives to the fullest and to participate in the economic, social and political decision making processes which affect their lives

6. Rights

6.1. Decision making in our country has in the past been characterised by the exclusion of the majority. In addition to being denied the right to vote, many other rights such as the full right to strike, the right to rural women to own land, and rights for disabled people have been denied.

6.2. We want all our people to live their lives to the fullest and to participate in the economic, social and political decision making processes which affect their lives. In this way, our RDP will be implemented by our people.

6.3. Legislation drawn up by a democratic government will conform to international standards such as those adopted by the United Nations system. This includes legislation on worker, women's and children's rights and environmental policies.

6.4. In the process of the struggle against apartheid, many organisations and coalitions have drawn up charters. There are for example a Children's Charter, Aid's Charter and a Worker's Charter. The legislative processes of our RDP will be guided, amongst others, by these historic documents.

6.5. Our RDP is committed to ending all discriminatory practices based on colour, race, sex, religion, physical disability, marital status or nationality. Measures will be taken to prioritise those of our people who suffered under apartheid. Affirmative action programmes will be set up for youth, women and rural people.

6.6. Women's rights

6.6.1. A new constitution will recognise the fundamental equality between men and women in marriage, employment and in society.

6.6.2. The law will no longer discriminate against women on issues of land and home ownership, opening bank accounts and taxation policies. There will be equal pay for work of equal value.

6.6.3. We will campaign for the participation of women at leadership and other levels of our society. Measures, including education campaigns, will be embarked upon to correct gender discrimination.

6.6.4. Laws will protect women against rape, battery, abuse and harassment. Laws will also given attention to improved maternity benefits, parental rights and provision for child care.

6.7. Worker Rights

6.7.1. The right of workers to join trade unions and organise freely, their right to collective bargaining on all social and economic issues that affects them and the full right to strike will be guaranteed in the Bill of Rights.

6.7.2. A new labour market dispensation will to be put in place so that workers can be centrally involved in decision making about their work-places, their industries and the shaping of the economy.

6.7.3. This new dispensation will include measures aimed at facilitating job creation, job security, centralised bargaining, smooth and effective changes in employment patterns as the economy develops, health and safety and education and training of all workers.

6.8. Youth

6.8.1. The youth of South Africa have been severely marginalised by apartheid and are growing up in poverty and in communities with a disintegrating social fabric. They suffer from apartheid education. A substantial percentage of youth never reach secondary school. They constitute the largest percentage of the unemployed and have been exposed to high levels of domestic, criminal and political violence. Young women in particular suffer from these conditions more harshly.

6.8.2. Our RDP for youth development will focus on job creation and the provision of basic and vocational educatation and training. It will create conditions for the full development of youth. In programmes attacking poverty, there will be a specific focus on youth and children.

6.8.3. Our RDP will therefore restore the hope of young people in the future and their ability to be fully integrated into the social, economic and political mainstream of the country. It will

harness their resourcefulness, energy and enthusiasm to allow them to play a meaningful role in reconstructing our country.

7. Financing the Reconstruction and Development Programme

7.1. Our reconstruction and development programme is based on certain principles which are designed to facilitate the financing of this very extensive programme. Within the confines of the apartheid economy, it would be impossible to finance such a programme.

7.2. Our basic principles are that we are committed to address poverty, improve our export performance, broaden and reform our tax base, manage our balance of payments situation, streamline the state and its institutions and finally, involve our people in all their formations in unlocking this most valuable and productive asset.

7.3. We will need to restructure and redirect government expenditure (within existing constraints) according to the priorities set out in this programme.

7.4. In addition, we will set up a Fiscal Commission which will investigate all aspects of taxation, expenditure and deficit and debt financing, with the objective of, amongst others, making recommendations on tax reform including the broadening of the tax base and the introduction of new taxes.

7.5. Further we will seek to introduce new development instruments such as municipal bonds, community reinvestment instruments, development bonds, housing bonds, a national lottery and others, raise additional funds through bilateral and multilateral aid and also by both domestic and international borrowing.

8. Macro-economic stability

8.1. This programme is based on the need for an integrated plan encompassing the political, social and economic aspects of our society. Its success will unlock resources, lessen macro economics constraints and lead to new possibilities of financing. This is the major challenge and it is only by implementing this programme that we can look forward to a future of prosperity.

8.2. We will therefore not jeopardise the success of the RDP by short-sighted, expedient and ineffective actions which may lead to excessive inflation, the dislocation of the financial system, misuse of savings and unsustainable balance of payments deficits.

8.3. We are fully aware that macro economic imbalances have resulted in many obstacles to well-meaning programmes of growth, redistribution and development in many developing countries.

8.4. Macro economic stability is vital to the success of our programme. For this fundamental reason, coherent, strict and effective monetary and fiscal polices will be a cornerstone of our Reconstruction and Development Programme.

9. Taking the RDP forward

9.1. To enrich our RDP, we will draw on our membership, the leadership and membership of our mass democratic movement allies including the churches, civics, student, women and rural organisations, and others. We are confident that we will mobilise the widest spectrum of South Africans behind this Programme.

9.2. The following process is being followed:

9.2.1. An Alliance Summit held on 20 and 21 August 1993. (HELD)

9.2.2. ANC NEC held on 27—29 August 1993 to discuss draft. (DONE)

9.2.3. COSATU Special Congress from 10—12 September to consider the amended draft. (HELD)

9.2.4. Between September and November the following will take place:

▶ 9.2.4.1. Extensive involvement of mass democratic movement (MDM) formations.

▶ 9.2.4.2. An Alliance team, backed up by research, will develop the framework document into a proposed programme document which will include concrete proposals and time frames which will incorporate our present policy positions.

▶ 9.2.4.3. The Alliance and the MDM will take the programme to their constituencies. This will include the holding of regional workshops, discussion at the National Development Forum Conference and meetings with our representatives in the negotiating forums.

9.2.5. Towards the end of November an MDM/Alliance summit will meet to consider a further draft.

9.2.6. The ANC Conference on Strategy and Reconstruction from 17—19 December will consider this draft.

9.2.7. A Conference of Democratic Forces will be hosted by the Alliance/MDM in February 1994 to build consensus for our RDP.

9.2.8. By the February Conference, the Alliance will have engaged major stakeholders including the business community, domestic and international donors and multilateral organisations as part of the process of building a national democratic consensus on the RDP.

Unity of the Left

by Langa Zita (NUMSA Information Officer)

The COSATU Special Congress in September resolved, amongst other things, that COSATU should convene with the SACP a Conference for the Unity of the Left next year. This extremely significant resolution occurred against the background of a major debate involving, amongst other things, the question of a Working Class party as proposed by the NUMSA conference (see *AC* 2nd Quarter 1993).

The SACP has also made an active contribution to the debate on building the Left in our country. In the SACP's strategy conference paper on the party's "Role in the Transition to Democracy and Socialism" (see *AC* 1st and 2nd Quarters 1993) the following points are argued:

- the party has no exclusive copyright on socialism;
- the process of contributing to the struggle towards socialism is heterogeneous;
- socialism is not the end product of the national democratisation process, but rather an integral part of consolidating the democratic revolution.

All of these interventions are part of what *Work in Progress* editor, Chris Vick, has described as a "general revolution of ideas". And this ferment of ideas is, in its turn, part of a general concern about the fate of the working class in the unfolding scenario in South Africa. Many raise the question: will the working class be sold out? What is the link between a negotiated transition and the struggle for socialism? The historical situation gives rise to many frustrations. There is the seemingly unending cycle of violence. There are negotiations that increasingly leave the masses behind. And there is a movement whose practice appears, increasingly, to emphasise a break rather than a continuity with its militant mass-driven traditions.

What follows is an attempt to take the debate on Left Unity forward by:

- examining the concept of the Left in general, and its applicability in South Africa;
- interrogating the case for Left unity, and, in particular, the strategic objective of such unity; and, lastly,
- looking at the possible forms that such unity can take. In the process I shall identify a two-pronged approach

to the question.

The concept of the Left

There is a long Marxist tradition that locates the Left/Socialist project within the revolutionary democratic traditions of the French Revolution. In line with this, essential to the Left concept in the late 20th century is the promotion of various forms of liberty, both collective and individual; the promotion of various forms of democratisation; and the promotion of various forms of solidarity in opposition to oppressive elites, including the owners of capital. However, it is not only the ideals of the French revolution that should inform the Left project today. This project needs to locate itself in opposition to the common crime, not only of the French but of Europe as a whole. This is the crime that started with the enslavement of the African people, their colonisation and neocolonisation, and their present subjection to the IMF, to toxic waste and the globalisation of capital. Also central to today's concept of the Left would be the common crime that we, as men, commit against the majority of our planet – women (gender oppression). Central, also, is the harm that men and women do to the environment. A meaningful Left project in the late 20th century must locate itself within all of these concerns.

The question is how to keep the movement true to itself within a context that constantly encourages a negation of its essence. The battle is for the soul of the ANC

In broad terms, the Left can be defined as all those who struggle for a better world without oppression and economic exploitation. The Left project links struggles against various forms of human oppression and environmental abuse with the class basis of society, and with the understanding that working class liberation is the fundamental cornerstone for the solution of other forms of oppression.

The Left debate in South Africa and the ANC

As already noted, the present Left debate in South Africa is deeply influenced by the emerging process of political democratisation. The centrality of the ANC within this democratisation process means that much of the debate is focused on the ANC itself.

The unfolding process carries with it new factors that have the capacity to change the character of the ANC both

positively and negatively. Among these are:

- the governmental role which the ANC will soon assume. This is a major victory, but it can set in motion negative tendencies towards bureaucratisation and remoteness from mass struggles;
- a wide range of new forces (like, for instance, white Randburg town councillors) now joining the ANC;
- the need for the ANC to play a nation-building function, to talk on behalf of society as a whole;
- the constraints of a neoliberal world order.

It is essential for the Left, not to wish away these new constraints and challenges, but to engage with them in a manner that reinforces the transformative aims of the movement. How do we pursue the objective of effective and transparent governance, whilst maintaining and consolidating a mass base? How do we project a national consensus that is reconcilable with the short and long-term interests of the major social forces that the movement represents? Essentially, therefore, the question is how to keep the movement true to itself within a context that constantly encourages a negation of its essence. The battle is for the soul of the ANC.

But it is also more than this. It is, simultaneously, an attempt to advance the political economy of the working class in the present conditions of our country, to make that working class political economy at first a key factor, and ultimately the basis of the reconstructed South Africa. This means the elaboration of a socialist project not only or mainly outside of, but essentially inside of the ANC-led movement.

The international context

The discussion on the Unity of Left in South Africa is also occurring, of course, in an international context. The collapse of actually existing socialism, the actually existing impotence of post-colonial Africa, the actual setbacks of social democracy — all call for a rethink. This is particularly the case as we are, in one way or another, connected to these developments.

But internationally the past decades have also seen the re-emergence of popular movements, new social movements pregnant with possibilities. With the possible exception of ourselves, in most countries these social movements have been at odds with the Leninist tradition, as well with nationalist politics, both at a theoretical and practical level.

The Left in South Africa

Unity is the coming together of differing elements in a combined, yet

dialectical process. It is a living process, whose synthesis is not the liquidation of differences, but the emergence of the new from the old, whilst embodying the best of the old. So what do we inherit from the past?

Behind the diversity, it seems that there is a principal issue that divides the Left in our country

The African, racial, black dimension of the South African question, has meant that the Left in South Africa is deeply influenced by the various forms of progressive race consciousness that have emerged in the struggle to negate racial oppression. In different ways at different times, talking to the broad experience of racial oppression, we have seen in our history nationalism in its conservative but also various progressive modes, including the non-racial Congress tradition, Pan Africanism and Black Consciousness.

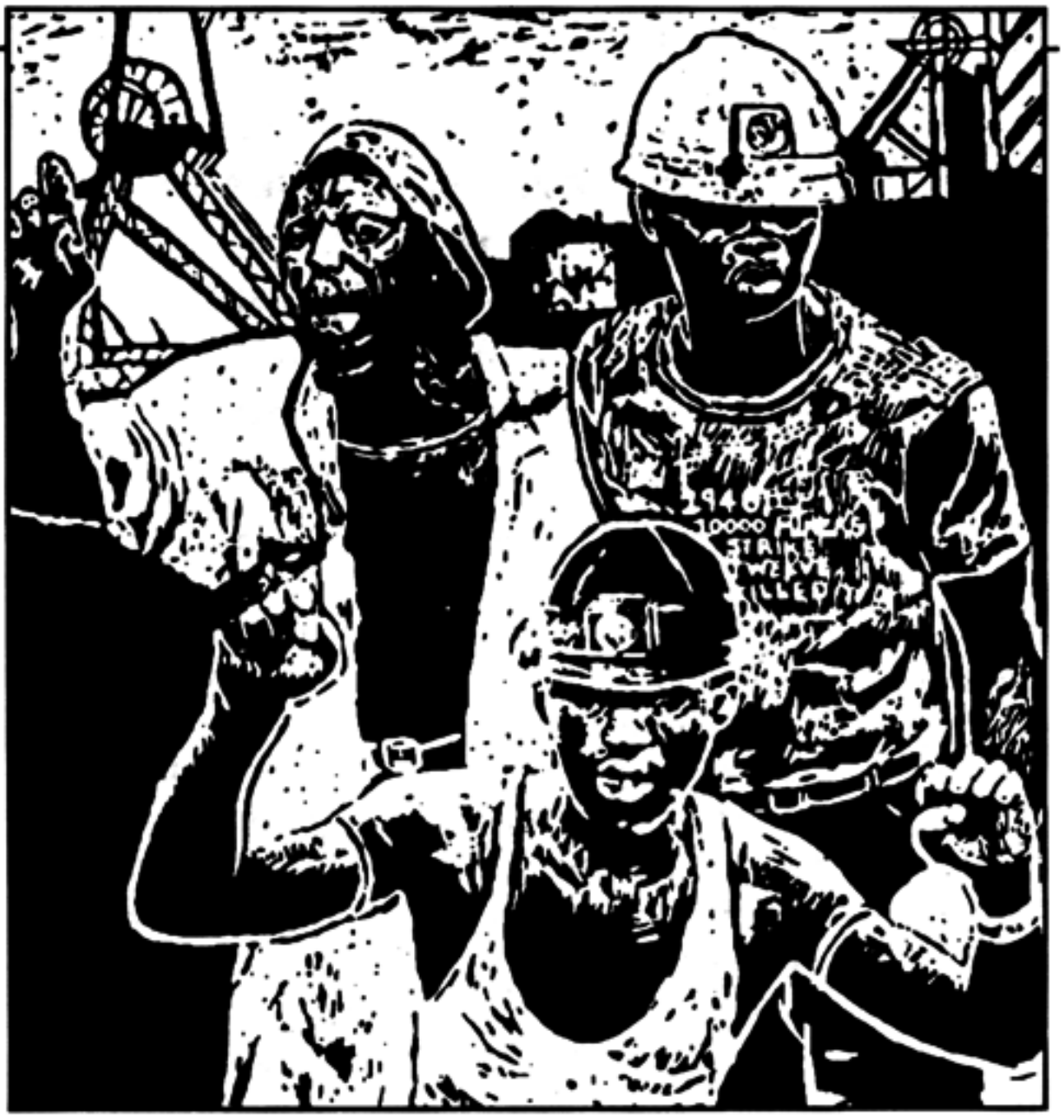
Yet, if these were the "major" forms of expression of the "special colonial" question, as early as the latter part of the 19th century, these currents coexisted with others addressing the fundamental question of our epoch – capitalist oppression and exploitation. The emergence of the CPSA and the various Trotskyite movements, such as the Unity Movement and today's WOSA and ISSA and others, represent the twin daughters of 1917, and together reflect the oldest expressions of the universalist socialist traditions in our country.

Any attempt at Left Unity has to begin with what exists as the Left in our country. Behind the diversity, it seems to me that there is a principal issue that divides the Left in our country. Behind the debates on Trotsky and Lenin, Gramsci and Mao, non-racism and pan-Africanism, is the question of how different left formations and traditions define themselves in regard to the ANC.

There are those Left forces that originate from, or are aligned with congress traditions, and there are those that are outside. The congress movement Left is further divided between those organisations which are formally allied with the ANC (in particular, the SACP and COSATU), and those, mostly from the mass democratic movement, which have a less formal relationship.

The Left within the Congress Movement

The ANC-SACP alliance of more than 70 years has developed as the dominant factor in the socialist/nationalist current. This congress tradition has developed in



competition with its Trotskyite and Pan Africanist sisters. Our history is testimony to the elusiveness of a united struggle of these traditions.

There have also been strains with the new social movements that emerged in the years of illegality and exile for the ANC and SACP. The Black Consciousness movement and the independent union and civic movement were sometimes perceived as a threat by the older movements, frustrated by their enforced remoteness in jail or exile. Mistakes were made from all sides, both tactical and strategic.

However, in time there was a process of constructive engagement and mutual enrichment, particularly between the new unionism and the old Left. COSATU's birth in 1985 formalised this engagement. The unbanning of the ANC and the SACP, and the crystallisation of the present tripartite alliance represents a consolidation of this trend.

But the contradictions are far from over. We in the South African Left

have not looked each other in the eye. This remains a major challenge.

We in the South African Left have not looked each other in the eye. This remains a major challenge

The critical role of COSATU

Presently COSATU is the largest and most organised force supporting socialism in our country. COSATU has emerged as a central force in shaping the character of the new society. The federation has a significant research capacity which gives it the ability to confront the neoliberal agenda of the ruling bloc with concrete alternative programmes. With a wide diversity of socialist traditions within it, with its power and sophistication, and with its strategic location in the tripartite alliance, COSATU is well positioned, not just to propagate a working class political economy, but actually to see it implemented.

The centrality of the SACP

The SACP has a long-standing commitment to forging unity of working class organisations, and as such it has every interest in fostering unity of the Left. As the oldest and most organised Left force, with a relatively coherent cadreship spread through almost all the formations of the democratic movement, the party is well poised to jointly play a leading role in the elaboration of the socialist vision.

The SACP should see itself as the conscience of this process, looking at the weaknesses, highlighting contradictions, creating the capacity for the self-activity of the working class, while not substituting itself for that class.

In playing this role, the SACP has to come to terms with the present situation in which the process of transition heralds not the seizure of power in the revolutionary sense, but the beginning of a war of position which will involve the continuous corroding of the ruling class over a long period. The activities of the working class in this process cannot be concentrated exclusively in one organisation. The working class will need to be active in multiple locations — at work, at school, in church, in the state, in the institutions of culture... everywhere. For the challenges that lie ahead, the party needs to produce cadres, who will be both effective and critical.

We need rounded cadres who are capable of intervening in the debates around industrial restructuring, or

macro-economics without losing their grounding in the concrete struggles of the people. The idea of a Chris Hani Cadre school for the broad democratic, labour and socialist movement is particularly suggestive in this regard.

Both COSATU and the SACP should see it as their responsibility to ensure that the unity of the Left is realised with a clear purpose and direction.

The Left in the Mass Democratic Movement

Apart from the COSATU unions, the most important mass democratic formation is the civic movement. The civic movement has its roots in the communities and tends, therefore, to be looser in character, emphasising the constituency rather than a specific political identity. The old and new Left have co-existed in the civic movement from its origins.

The late development of a national character (in SANCO) and the evolution of the civic movement within the plural if broadly ANC-aligned contours of the UDF, has meant that tendencies of all sorts could coexist in the civic movement.

There are, however, now critical questions around the civic movement's future, its role and problems of resources, the various forms of engagement with development initiatives and with banks. The problems of housing, education, unemployment, lack of infrastructural development and the land question, confronting civic members daily, make them of necessity an ally of the Left project.

Youth and student formations

The youth sector has, in the recent past, played a cutting edge role in our revolution. The sector, at present, has unfortunately lost its feet in the transition process. But the youth remain critical for the Left movement. Moves towards a unity of the Left could help this sector find its feet once more, imbuing the youth with progressive values, and enabling them to channel their energies in a progressive direction.

Progressive religious and other formations

There are also the progressive religious formations which have opted for the poor. How does this sector of our movement engage in the transformative project? The same can be said about individuals and institutions who want to input into the renewal of the Left project, but who/which have hitherto been hindered in various ways. The feminist and sexual consciousness movements as well as the environmental causes also often suffer from isolation. All of these formations have a natural

affinity with the Left, and they should be encouraged to find a place and make a contribution to the unity of the Left project.

All of these formations have a natural affinity with the Left and should be encouraged to contribute to the unity of the Left project

Unity of the Left within the Congress Movement

The unity of the Left, first of all, **within** the congress tradition, would have as its prime objective the consolidation of strong organisations for reconstruction and for the many struggles that lie ahead. Secondly, such unity should facilitate a creative relationship between state organs and civil society, empowering, in the process, mass input into the democratic state. It should ensure a broad ideological and strategic unity on the character and direction of the present transition struggles. This would be realised both through the creation of appropriate institutions and through a programme of struggle at national, regional and local levels (thus bringing back some of our UDF traditions).

The Left outside of the Congress Movement

AZAPO and the PAC, in different ways, remain with their isolated versions of transition. As long as they remain stuck in these orientations they will, unfortunately, have a limited contribution to make to the development of a coherent Left approach to the present situation. Nonetheless, I believe that Black Consciousness and Pan Africanism have something to contribute to the process of Left unity insofar as they are able to locate their ideas within the concrete concerns of the working class and rural poor.

WOSA, in my judgement, appears more willing to contribute to the transition process. Various interventions in their journals and publications appear, if with varying emphases, to be offering views that show a willingness to input constructively into the present process. We need to engage with WOSA in discussion, avoiding the temptation to over-emphasise the past.

Since the collapse in eastern Europe there has, incidentally, been a growing international dialogue among socialists of all persuasions, giving rise to interesting new forums such as the Sao Paulo Forum, bringing together Left formations in South and

Central America and the Caribbean. Locally, there has been the recent COSATU/CGIL/CUT seminar, bringing together the largest labour federations in South Africa, Italy and Brazil — each with their own rich Left traditions.

Are we mature enough to embrace each other and walk the uneasy walk to genuine freedom?

Should there be a programme or a platform?

This brief political landscape has, in the first place, been an attempt to look at what we have in its beauty and ugliness, and consider what needs to be done. We need, above all, to build an effective Left alternative in this unipolar world in which we are living.

Of course, the character of the unity of the Left cannot be conceived beforehand. Thus the project itself must be approached with guarded optimism. The central objective should be to contest the character of the new society through contesting the character of the ANC from within the congress movement, and also by broadening the Left consensus outside of the congress movement.

In the first instance, a **programme** of the Left forces within the ANC tradition must be developed. Such a programme should emphasise concrete perspectives on what an alternative means for all aspects of the South African reality.

Secondly, we should pursue a Left consensus beyond the Congress movement- a process that can be realised through a **platform**. A platform is more loose and flexible than a manifesto or programme. It outlines frameworks but does not have the exactness of policy.

Whilst one cannot foresee the mood and the tone of the first broad Left meeting in our country (and thus I may be wrong in arguing against a programme), I think that a platform would be preferable if we are to **begin** to overcome the mistrust and animosity of the past.

The process of unifying the Left is the most important medium term challenge of the democratic movement. It is at a delicate stage presently and needs patience and nurturing.

The critical question remains: Are the various tendencies within the South African Left, both within and outside the congress movement, mature enough to embrace each other and walk the uneasy walk to genuine freedom? I think that we are.

Our socialism – the Brazilian Workers Party

by Luis Inacio da Silva – Lula

THE time has come to say and make it thoroughly clear that our Workers Party in Brazil is not the rearguard relic of an out-of-date political project that leaks from all sides and was dealt some sort of a death blow by the ruin of the countries of Eastern Europe.

We know that there are a good many ideologues with ulterior motives who consider the emblem of our party – the star – to be one of those dead heavenly bodies whose light can be seen long after their extinction. But we believe they are mistaken. The Workers Party (PT) is, in our opinion, proof that a new era is beginning for the struggles of the people, one in which a reorganisation of the forces for progress is feasible, providing that it rises from the working class itself and that it holds out the perspective of solving the problems of the whole of society. We believe that it has been proven that this reorganisation works for Brazil. But we believe, too, that it can make good sense well beyond the borders of Brazil.

The PT did not arise from nowhere. The working class and progressive movement exist in Brazil. A section of the trade union movement has had great experience in class struggle. There has been armed struggle in our country, although it was less significant than elsewhere in Latin America. The Communist Party had tried to respond to the dissatisfaction of the people, but in the framework of very broad alliances with a stratum of the national "elites".

Luis Inacio da Silva, known as "Lula" throughout Latin America, is president of the Brazilian Workers Party (PT). In Brazil's last presidential election in 1989, he received 48 percent of the second-round (final) vote, and narrowly missed being elected.

The uniqueness of the PT consists in the fact that it was born through the determination of a group of trade unionists to give political expression to the aspirations of the world of labour. This outlook clearly differs from that of the Brazilian Communist Party. In its better times, the CP sent its intellectual cadres to base themselves in the factories. We took our worker cadres out of the factories so that they could lead our Party.

The PT was formally born in February 1980. But its real birth took place in 1978. There were very bitter strikes that year, especially in the ABCD – Santo Andre, Sao Bernardo, Sao Caetano and Diadema – the industrial belt around Sao Paulo, where the automobile plants and most of the metal-working industries are located.

The demands of those struggles centred on wages. But they were broadened in the process of the work itself, in struggle against the discipline in the factory. This made it possible to build the bridge between immediate demands and the aspiration for the democratic reorganisation of society. It also resulted in the decision taken the same year, in Lins, by a congress of metal workers to create a party of workers.

The uniqueness of the PT consists in the fact that it was born through the determination of a group of trade unionists to give political expression to the aspirations of the world of labour

Many tendencies

When we look at the stages of development of the PT, it is worthwhile to pay a great deal of attention to the multiplicity of components that have, step by step, made it what it is today.

To be sure there was, from the first, the "authentic" trade union component - trade unionists who, in or outside of official trade unionism, had known how to maintain a class struggle orientation. The great majority of the top leaders of the PT have that characteristic. But there is also a trade union opposition working in the official unions. There were, likewise, organisers of peasant leagues and rural unions at the same time that trade unionism spread spectacularly among the peasants.

There were also very diverse political components: Trotskyites, Castroists, Communist Party of Brazil organisers and those of the left wing of the major opposition party, the Brazilian Democratic Movement.

There was also critical support for the

PT by the workers in the progressive sectors of the church, especially in the early days from among the Catholics. People who espoused liberation theology, from almost all of the basic ecclesiastic communities, joined the PT. Above all, there was the support of the whole social movement, of all the organised people's movements. The neighbourhood associations, the organisations that carry on the struggles for creches, for schools, for health care, water, the mothers' clubs, the women's movement, the ecologists, nearly all the progressive components of civil society found their place in the PT. That is why we succeeded in building the PT so fast nationally. And it is also the reason that we now have 600 000 members.

We have also succeeded in building, step by step, a party that serves all society. But at its base, it is a party in which the workers retain hegemony, and which works for the transformation of society based on the workers' conception of it.

We had, at that time, a caricatured vision of this requirement. This was a period when, if a taxi driver wanted to join the PT, his membership was rejected because he was considered a boss. That is a point of view that we have since changed.

Of course, the pluralism maintained by the PT has created a very complicated situation. There were really all kinds in the Party. We have had as many as 19 trends. I believe that, in the long run, pluralism contributed a great deal to the PT, helped it very much.

The main problems were clearly with the organised groups that joined the PT and which already had their own practices, programme and culture. I believe the time has come to acknowledge publicly that, in spite of differences, they contributed greatly to the building of our Party. They have, I believe, learned much from us and we also have learned from them.

In 1990, we set up what we called a "regulation of tendencies" which was something very new in Brazil. We are very glad that many left and ultra-left groups joined the PT, the only condition being that they considered the PT not as an arena in which to work, a kind of tactical and transitional front, but as their "strategic" party, their basic mass party that they wanted to build.

All these currents have been authorised to have their own press, on condition that it not be distributed inside the Party. All the meetings of a trend are authorised on condition that any Party member may choose to attend. Also, everyone, in defence of their own viewpoint, may participate in the diverse projects of the PT.

One shouldn't get the idea that building the PT was an easy matter, that it was accomplished without running into obstacles and without debate. A section of the left sharply criticised the formation of the PT. It thought that it was necessary, first of all, to "re-democratise" the country before raising the question of a socialist alternative. It also was of the opinion that the creation of the PT played a divisive role in

relation to the very broad "democratic" front that it was necessary to build for the task of "re-democratisation".

This was the basis of our disagreement. To return to the legislation in effect before the 1964 military coup could not satisfy us. It would have subordinated the unions to the state, hampered the free organisation of parties, stripped all sectors of socially disadvantaged Brazilians, actually millions of people, of the exercise of their citizenship. And, more generally, we were convinced that real democratisation of Brazilian life involved attacking Brazilian capital.

We didn't have the answers: we were looking for them

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Developing our programme

If we examine our strength at the present time, it certainly seems that we finally have become convincing enough. Certainly, we have gained influence and a national existence, for militancy as well as electorally, with entire sections of civil society joining the PT. But the question is, why have they joined the PT? I believe that one factor greatly stimulated all this growth: We were not born with a finished programme that was the product of an ideological conception outside our experience.

On the contrary, we were born questioning "really-existing socialism" from the start. From the first, we condemned the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, we defended Solidarnosc. In reality, we always knew that the phrase "really existing socialism" was mystifying. The real practices of so-called "really-existing socialism" were incompatible with the term "socialism as liberator" which it hoped to claim for itself. For our part, we are not in agreement with the absence of political, economic and social democracy; with the symbiosis of the party and the state, with the monopoly of power by a single party while pluralism was formally allowed; with repression, open or concealed, of ideological and cultural pluralism; with the management of production by vertical, authoritative and inefficient planning. One can lengthen the list of our objections, but, as we see, they were at the heart of "really existing socialism".

We have, from the beginning, been equally distant from social-democracy. The past social-democratic experiments have amply proved that it doesn't suffice to get into government and the institutions of the state – without mobilisation of the masses at the base, it

is impossible to realise socialism. In reality, the social-democrats thought the state was neutral and that it was possible for it to be an efficient instrument for a peaceful transition to a socially and economically different system. When it became evident that they were mistaken, they abandoned all their prospects for transition to socialism, but didn't give up their positions in the state or its institutions. Critical dialogue with social democracy is useful for the struggle of workers on an international level. But, obviously, our ideological project has nothing in common with theirs.

It is essential to say straight off that, if we were not proponents of a programme brought in from the outside, neither were we proponents of a specific ideology nor of a finished programme which had been formulated by the initiating nucleus of the PT. On the contrary, we had the idea that we would elaborate such a programme step by step, in the process of building the PT. That was a fundamental difference from all the other existing groups and currents, each one of which had their well-finished little programme, their pocket manual. They were supposed to have the answers for everything!

We didn't have the answers: we were looking for them. I am convinced that is one of the reasons for the appeal of the PT – the social activists who joined us also did so because they were not asked to adhere to a ready-made programme, worked out without them. On the contrary, we asked them to come to work out with us, on the basis of their own experience, the answers to the questions that we ourselves ask.

We have had a pragmatic procedure and I believe it was a good one. We not only discussed socialism in general, but we also worked out, in a very concrete way, solutions for the present. We have done it by discussing matters with all sectors of the social movement, including those not in the PT. We are because of this, guaranteed against vanguardism.

When we were confronted with the Collor government, we set up a "parallel government" in order to depict a political alternative. It is a co-ordinated structure in which "working sectors" corresponding more or less to ministries were placed under activists of the PT or under experts who are not members of the PT. It has been a very rich experience, and I hope that it will serve at a time when the consequences of the Collor experiment are definitively interred. It has enabled us to quickly understand that it is not sufficient to content oneself with criticising the initiative of the Collor government but that it is necessary to furnish political alternatives.

It wasn't that simple to get it under way. All the founders of the PT – I first of all – had a good deal of experience as trade unionists. We knew how to defend the interests of the classes we represented. For twelve years we had to go through the experience of conceiving a government programme that would be suitable for hundreds of categories, finding a perspective for a nation whose

total resources cannot be expended in wages, where it is also essential to invest in health and education. Rationally, we well know that it will be necessary to make these choices. But sometimes they come into conflict with our eternal trade union convictions.

From that perspective the experience of the parallel government has been useful to us. It has produced some ten plans: on agriculture, agrarian reform, health, industrial development, education, on questions about the Amazon, the development of the North-East, the energy programme, and the bases of an economic programme. It has helped us a great deal.

... the socialism we want must surpass the perverted way of thinking about the market and the command-economies of the would-be socialist societies where the state, from on high, decided everything.

In the past, we often had the habit of tackling problems to be solved in rather general terms, in the ideal, the desirable. But our union roots also have advantages: they taught us to think in terms of the balance of power and the capacity for action. The PT, in this way, presented a series of very precise alternative measures that we wanted. When we raised the question of employment, we fought against the absence of advance notice of lay-offs. Also, in metallurgy we had reached an agreement under which we postponed wage discussions for 180 days, but, in exchange, we were guaranteed that there would be no layoffs during those 180 days. It was agreed, too, that autoworkers would get an immediate 20 percent decrease in the price of vehicles. When we took up "the question of a price freeze", we demanded that the maximum authorised prices be marked at the time the manufactured products were packed. When we took up tax reform, we stressed the taxation of large stretches of unproductive rural property. And we are not satisfied with mere opposition to privatisation plans: we proposed the creation of a fund for Economic and Social Development, financed from part of the surplus of the trade balance, in order to fund investment in infrastructures and to provide money for developing the public takeover of education and healthcare.

Our socialism

But these proposals are not separated from our long term perspectives. We are

precise in our view that the socialism we want must surpass the perverted way of thinking about the market and the command-economies of the would-be socialist societies where the state, from on high, decided everything. Economic choices must be made on the basis of the social will and no longer on the alleged "strategic interests" of the state. In order to do that, we will institute what we call "strategic planning" under social control. And we will create the mechanisms to make it possible to effectively put into practice the choices made. In this way, economic democracy will have to be supported by the development of the social ownership of the means of production. Social ownership does not mean state ownership – nationalisation may be one of the forms it may take – but others will exist, beginning with the cooperative form.

In general, the state cannot be the instructor of society. Nor can a political party. The political party in the best of situations contributes to the organisation of society. As for the state, it has the responsibility of organising the systems of production and distribution. And during that time, people with the consensus that exists between them and the differences that separate them still continue to be human beings.

Examples of what the state ought to do abound. I'll take only one: at the present time in Brazil 30 percent of grain production is lost, lost somewhere between production and consumption. The state is doing nothing, and at the same time people are dying of hunger. In this situation, the state in our opinion, ought to take charge of production, guarantee distribution, regulate prices. Obviously that would clash with powerful interests and the existing state is not one to carry out this policy.

The nature of the state must be profoundly modified. Clearly it is incumbent on the state to fairly distribute the riches produced. To say that is not to advocate an abstract egalitarianism. A society that is egalitarian is not one in which an engineer gets the same salary as a lathe hand and a professor the same salary as a secretary. People should be respected for what they are, for their productive capacity – which is also their capacity for intellectual production – for their creativity. The person who produces more, who has more intellectual capacity should get more. It is only in this way, it must be added, that we are able to develop, stimulate the creativity of the human being.

We know that in other respects that we shall have to reconcile two objectives and we know that will not be easy. Because, on the one hand, it will be necessary to satisfy the material needs of society, and in order to do that, increase productivity in the enterprises. And, on the other, it will be necessary to introduce a new organisation of production that is less oppressive for the workers.

In the political field, socialism will have to preserve all democratic liberties and expand them. To do this we will

establish mechanisms for direct democracy that will facilitate the participation of the masses at different levels of political leadership and economic management. The "peoples councils" that we tried to set up in the municipalities are a good example of these. We have the same idea for production units where we want to set up "factory councils." These instruments for direct democracy will have to coexist with flexible mechanisms for consultation with the people, instruments that are capable of expressing collective interests without the intervention of capitalism.

In general, we want to install structures, ways of functionality that will make it possible for a pluralist society to endure, which do not deny the rights of opponents and which respect the minorities. We want a kind of operation that reflects the forms of organisation inherent in civil society, beginning with the right to organise trade unions and the right to strike. We want a society that places no limit on the creativity of the human being.

We have very carefully thought over the question of democracy. At the beginning there was a great deal of difficulty in establishing the relationship between socialism and democracy. There were among us currents that thought of democracy as a kind of tactical device. We also noticed that in our ranks there was frequently a tendency to "adjectivise" democracy, for example, democracy-this, democracy-that. Obviously that could be useful, could make it possible to clarify, to be more precise. But, underneath, there was always a regressive angle that brought back the old debate between socialist democracy and bourgeois democracy. Well, we are of the opinion that democracy should be considered as a workers' conquest. That is especially true in Latin America. But it also true when one looks at the democratic experience in Europe. Democracy was something that was never an advance consciously upheld by the bourgeoisie, but rather an achievement of the workers. Universal suffrage was the foremost demand of the Chartist movement in England. And we could find many other cases: for example the freedom to organise.

We cannot leave the mantle of democracy to the bourgeoisie: on the contrary, they limited and used democratic achievements for their own ends. It is the working class that carried out the struggle for democracy.

We want a society that places no limit on the creativity of the human being

To the beat of Latin America

We have, at the present time, to conduct community politics with all Latin America in mind. That isn't easy because occasionally situations are different and, quite often, they converge. They history of what our struggles in Latin America have been is still important. What is more, it has importance for our Party: 95 percent of the militants who participated in the armed struggle in Brazil are now members of our Party. Many are cadres of the PT and this chapter in our history has contributed enormously to the development of many of our leaders.

But what is the situation now? The first time I went to Managua, the principal slogan was "Nicaragua has won, Salvador will win." That was 12 years ago and the guerrillas in Salvador have not yet won.

We believe that armed struggle is not, at this time, the correct solution. From that point of view, we will consider as a very rich experience what the FMLN in Salvador is trying to do, that is to organise the transition from armed to political struggle. The advantage of political struggle is the possible involvement of the greatest number of the progressive sectors of society in the construction of the alternative we desire, so that they will be actors, not spectators, in the struggle.

And next, there is of course the influence of the Cuban experience. For those in the PT with grey hair, the Cuban Revolution embodies all the mad hopes of our youth. So we do not question the Cuban revolution. The entire PT is solidly for defense of the Cuban revolution.

Nevertheless, we do not agree with all the choices made by the Cuban revolution. We have already discussed with the Cuban comrades the necessity of democratising the functioning of the Party, political openness, guaranteeing trade union freedom and autonomy, guaranteeing political pluralism and the discussion of ideas. We are very frank in this debate, but, at the same time, we are very respectful.

All that proves that common policies are not always easy to decide on. That is the reason we founded the Sao Paulo Forum: because we wanted very heterogeneous organisations and currents to meet together and discuss. That has been taking place between one and every country, and it is also true inside each country. There are countries in which there are fourteen organisations of the left. All these currents knew little of each other, sometimes not even speaking to each other. We have persuaded everyone to dialogue. At the time of the first Forum we found it extremely hard to get a common statement written. But we succeeded in getting it done.

We have now called the Forum together for the third time. There were 49 organisations at Sao Paulo, 68 in Mexico coming from 22 Latin American and Caribbean countries and a good many more in Managua. If the interest in these meetings keeps growing, it is probably because all those organisations

– those that are carrying on armed struggle, those that are no longer doing it, and those who have never employed it – are confronted with the same problem: that of changing the cycle of events that affects the political situation.

As for us, we understand very well that it is necessary to have patience and that patience is a virtue very necessary for the left. We have, at times, to content ourselves with advancing through bilateral relations. But whenever possible, we proceed as a united body, together with all participants in the Forum. For example, we are now thinking of taking some action toward the North American community, including at the government level, to get it to understand the points of view of the Latin American left. We will do it with all the parties in Latin America that have enough influence and are recognised.

With the European Left

We expect, likewise, to organise a meeting of the Sao Paulo Forum with the European left next June. The PT has been put in charge of the preparations for this meeting. Not all the members of the Sao Paulo Forum will attend. We foresee a delegation of about fifteen members, including delegations of the Guatemalan left, our comrades the Sandinistas of Nicaragua, the PRD of Mexico, the Uruguayan Broad Front, Colombia'a M19, the Socialist Party of Chile, the Paraguayan left, etc.

We don't want this meeting to be, as in the past, simply a show of solidarity. We know that the European left has problems which are, perhaps, more serious than ours. We would like to begin by exchanging our experiences, our points of view and then see what common elements there can be for a joint strategy, even on small points.

The idea is to have this discussion with the European left include two questions. First, what roles the European left and Latin America can play in the political and economic reorganisation of the world. Second, to see how to lay the foundations for real North–South dialogue.

That is, for us, an important step, considering the past and the way in which ties have been broken. A long time ago, we knew quite a number of leaders of the European left. We knew Felipe Gonzales when he was a young lawyer in exile. We knew Mario Soares when he went from exile to exile as a persecuted politician. But once they came to power – and we could say the same thing about the French socialists –

they no longer maintained relations with the Latin American left.

When, three years ago, for the first time in the history of Brazil, there were free elections and there was a possibility of a citizen of the left acceding to power, there wasn't the smallest manifestation of political help and support for us. I am not complaining. I am making an observation, and I think it may be a necessary one for success in establishing new relations. And what makes the discussion urgent is the fact that the third industrial revolution has not brought corresponding social progress. It hasn't done so far for the industrialised countries, even less in Latin America. It is high time to radically rethink the organisation of work on a world scale, to supercede national corporate influence, to stimulate a great worldwide discussion and see to it that everybody finally thinks of our continent from the point of view of social parameters and not with the cold formulas of liberal economists. ☭

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Sao Paulo Forum

Draft Declaration

THE Fourth Meeting of the Sao Paulo Forum, meeting in Havana, from 21-24 July 1993, with the participation of 112 member organisations and 25 observers of the region, demonstrated the vitality of the nationalist, anti-imperialist, democratic, popular, leftist and socialist political forces of Latin America and the Caribbean committed to radical change in our continent. Likewise, the attendance of 43 observers from the political forces of North America, Europe, Asia and Africa revealed the significance that our Forum has acquired.

The selection, during the Third Meeting in Managua, of the City of Havana as the venue of this Forum, turned out to be extremely significant. The incorporation of 30 anti-colonialist, popular and democratic political forces of the Caribbean was achieved, strengthening this unifying effort. We were able to see first hand the difficult situation which our sister nation of Cuba is experiencing and to confirm the serious effects of the blockade and the systematic policy aggression carried out by the government of the United States. We also witnessed the firmness and the will to struggle which Cubans demonstrate daily in order to safeguard the economic and social conquests they have achieved. These revolutionary achievements are even more significant considering that 180 million Latin American and Caribbean people live in poverty, 88 million of whom suffer from extreme poverty or indigence.

Therefore, the Fourth Meeting reaffirms its resolute condemnation of the immoral imperialist blockade against Cuba and commits itself to increase political action directed at lifting it, as well as to the full and unconditional integration of Cuba into the continental community of which it forms an indivisible part.

The Sao Paulo Forum has become

an unprecedented event. Political forces of the region with diverse ideological and political orientations have found ways of advancing down the difficult and inevitable path of unity in diversity based upon our own historical development and consolidated in an ethnically and culturally mestizo continent, which is the basis of our potential development and a model of a sovereign, just and integrating society.

Latin America and the Caribbean are resisting the application of the neoliberal model in the midst of a unipolar world made up of hegemonic economic blocs which are redefining the terms of exchange and the international division of labor according to technological parameters.

During the last year the neoliberal model, which until then had been absolutely hegemonic began to fall apart. The removal of the Presidents of Brazil, Venezuela and Guatemala demonstrated the force of social mobilisation and the people's will for change in both the struggle against corruption and the rejection of anti-popular economic policies. Another example of this rejection is the outcome of the elections in Uruguay where 72% of the voters voiced their opposition to the policy of privatising public enterprises, which neoliberalism has been imposing on Latin America.

The removal of the Presidents of Brazil, Venezuela and Guatemala demonstrated the force of social mobilisation and the people's will for change in both the struggle against corruption and the rejection of economic policies

The consequences of neoliberal policies are more visible today than ever. We are experiencing the indiscriminate opening up of the economy, blind trust in the market controlled by oligopolies and transnationals, the organisation of the economy in order to guarantee the payment of the foreign debt, and subjugation to policies defined in the IMF and the World Bank. This situation brings about the destruction of branches of industry – national ones in particular – and increases the inequalities among the various sectors of the economy, causing the deficit of our commercial balances and payments to grow and in some cases even leading our economies back to a new primary exporter stage. These policies also lead to the abandonment

of non-exportable agricultural production, undermine the possibility of self-sufficiency in food production, and above all, increase unemployment and dispense with all interest in equity and social justice. Therefore, even when there is growth in some countries, new jobs are not created, which contributes to progressively weakening the national states, diminishing the attention they give to urgent social needs, curtailing national sovereignty, and increasing inequalities, all of which impoverishes the population.

Poverty is increasingly more difficult to hide. Today, governments and international bodies are formally recognising this. The Third Ibero-American Summit had to include the question of misery in their agenda.

The absence of economic and social democracy, drug trafficking, corruption, militarism, repressive and intelligence bodies outside of democratic control, state terrorism and impunity constitute the most serious threats to building political democracy in Latin America.

The Forum highlighted the importance of the struggle for political democracy, understood as a historical product of the struggle of the peoples. It affirmed the need to strengthen democracy through a combination of representative means and participatory and direct forms of democracy, integrating institutional struggles with social struggles. It underscored, as well, the need to recognise ethnic and cultural pluralism and equality of the sexes and to incorporate these concepts into the exercise of democracy.

Likewise, the defence and strengthening of democratic conquests also includes the struggle against the corruption which has become a daily practice of the political elite in Latin America, both in its traditional forms and for neoliberal ones. Corruption is a political and ethical problem, evidenced by the attempts by the dominant classes to increasingly "privatise" the State, subordinating it to the service of corporate and private interests.

Democracy is incompatible with the continued existence of colonialism which subjugates many of the people of our continent and with the restrictions imposed upon the sovereignty and independence of our countries by foreign economic and political domination.

It is evident that the present economic and political state of the continent leads to the persistent violation of the human rights of our peoples and provokes social uprisings and desperate actions as well as a broad popular mobilisation gainst neoliberalism. Our political forces must contribute to the leadership and

organisation of the social struggles from a political perspective of historical transcendence.

In order to meet the challenge posed by the picture of social misery, ethical crisis, social and political instability and authoritarianism, it is necessary to move beyond denouncement and resistance to concrete proposals and alternative actions.

In order to meet the challenge posed by the picture of social misery, ethical crisis, social and political instability and authoritarianism, it is necessary to move beyond denouncement and resistance to concrete proposals and alternative actions

In the face of these challenges, many of the members of the Forum from countries such as Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, and Uruguay will be involved in presidential and other elections in their countries in the remaining months of 1993 and in 1994. The Forum supports the demand that all be clean and democratic elections.

We urge, therefore, the creation and implementation of development models which, expressing the interests and the organised power of mass movements, move toward sustained and independent environmentally balanced economic growth with equitable distribution of wealth, within the framework of strengthening democracy in all areas.

At the centre of this model are economic, political and social changes which grant the vast majority access to employment, consumer goods, property and civil rights. This model must also avoid the ecological damage caused by zeal for unlimited profit and by extreme poverty.

The formula of *"growth first, distribution second"* cannot be accepted, but rather a strategy of growth with distribution must be devised.

The development model which we desire presupposes combining the existence of the market with a regulatory function of the State – except in the case of colonies – and the energetic promotion of the structural changes necessary to shape development in democracy with social justice and, in particular, to guarantee the social policies: education, health, transportation, housing, etc.

We are experiencing a process of growing globalisation of the economy.

A development plan cannot ignore this. But in this process, the United States seeks to make Latin America and the Caribbean into simple appendices submitted to its economy, bound by the interests of big capital. This suggest to us once again the essential need for the continental integration of our peoples and nations.

First and foremost, integration must take place within Latin America and the Caribbean as a political and economic process that binds us as a political bloc and empowers us with the will to complement and compensate for the differences among our economies. Only a Latin American and Caribbean community of economically and politically integrated nations will have the strength to reposition itself, independently, in a world that today is controlled by the large economic blocs and their policies which are contrary to the interests of our peoples.

Independence, development, democratisation and integration should be neither separate nor consecutive processes. Rather, they must be integrated, interconnected actions, simultaneous with our economic and political task.

Integration should include productive activities and social objectives seen within a continental perspective. Therefore, it is necessary and viable to promote joint technological and scientific research, sharing human and natural resources and giving access to the achievements of our universities and research centres.

Despite the fact that objectively the United States has found it necessary to readjust its negative and unsuccessful hemispheric relations, the Fourth Meeting of the Forum still perceives ambiguities in the definition of the policies of the current US administration. In fact the policies of the previous administrations continue to prevail.

The military presence in Panama, the illegal occupation of the Guatanamo Base, the sustained blockade against Cuba and interventionism – linked or not to the fight against drug trafficking – as well as the political, economic and commercial pressures exerted on our countries, are among the situations which must radically change if an essentially new relationship between Latin America and the Caribbean and the United States is to come about. The latter must respect the exercise of our right to self-determination and consequently the plurality of economic and social systems on our continent.

The Sao Paulo Forum cites as an unacceptable and persisting reality the colonial status of Puerto Rico, French Guyana, Martinique, and other colonial territories, taking up the cause

of the national independence and self-determination of their peoples, and recognising as well Argentina's sovereignty over the Malvinas.

We express our support for the efforts being carried out in Central America by the Frente Sandinista de Liberacion Nacional (FSLN), the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN), and the Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca (URNG) to strengthen the peace processes developing in the area and for the unification and the making more flexible of policies favouring the masses. Likewise, we believe that the renewal of negotiations in Colombia for a political solution to the armed conflict is of the utmost importance, and we condemn the building of an authoritarian and militarised pseudoconstitutional regime in Peru which will not contribute to adequately resolving the serious problems of this sister country.

On the other hand, we support the struggle of the people of Haiti aimed at restoring democracy and constitutionality through the unconditional reinstatement of the legitimate President, and warn against the use of the agreement reached in New York as a pretext for foreign military interventionism in the country. ☭

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Peace, transition and transformation in Nicaragua

by Alejandro Bendana

Nicaragua's Sandinista Revolution may turn out to be the last revolution of the 20th century. Scenes witnessed in Petrograd, Beijing, Havana and Managua — armed overthrow of a repressive regime, the defeat of its army, the triumphant guerrilla march into the capital, the take-over of the state, the announcement of anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist programmes — may be images to be remembered, to draw inspiration from, but, perhaps, not to be repeated in our time.

Today, many of the world's liberation movements are more engaged in waging negotiations than in waging war. El Salvador, South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Cambodia and, once again, in Nicaragua, the keyword is dialogue and the preoccupation is with elections, as the historic contenders engage in a give and take process of negotiation. This is not to say that one form of struggle failed where another succeeded, nor does it mark the abandonment of the goal to end monopolistic privileges. In many cases, it took war in order to gain a rightful and respected place at the negotiation table.

Perhaps we are witnessing the arrival of the era of negotiated revolution. In countries such as South Africa, El Salvador and Nicaragua, this is no small historical success for the left to have finally acquired its rightful status of principal opposition with a clear possibility of assuming, or re-assuming, political office. Others feel that negotiation spells entrapment and historical compromise, the domestication of the left and the

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demobilisation of mass struggle by the triumphant forces of capitalism. For some, then, on the left the situation is one of confusion and despondency as the new political era compels us to re-think classical revolutionary theory and strategy.

"...perhaps we are witnessing the arrival of the era of negotiated revolution..."

Of course there can be no simple general picture. To generalise on the basis of what has happened in eastern Europe is precisely what our opponents invite us to do. There are no standard models for revolution, strategy and tactics have to vary according to specific cultural and historical situations. Indeed, what is revolutionary in one national or regional context, may appear to be reformist in another.

War and revolution in Nicaragua

Nevertheless, what is true of the Nicaraguan experience may be true elsewhere. Yes, it took a popular war of liberation to overthrow the Somoza family dynasty, and to crush its murderous army. Political liberation was achieved, but emancipation entailed promoting massive transformations in the economic and social order. The trouble was, and is, that there has never been a revolution without a counter-revolution, and in the history of Latin America there has never been a counter-revolution without the participation of the CIA.

Less than three years after ending the war against Somoza, a new aggression was unleashed on the Nicaraguan experiment by the United States. This aggression began to take its toll, steadily reducing the nation's capacity to sustain the pace of structural change. Of the 11 years the Sandinista government was in power, 8 were years of war. Still, much was accomplished, particularly in those early years when popular mobilisation brought down the illiteracy rate from 58% to less than 12%, and reduced the infant mortality rate by more than two-thirds. Thereafter, the principal task and achievement was ensuring the physical survival of the revolution.

Peace and Revolution

But survival at what price? Peace was essential, more for political and economic reasons than on account of any military weakness on our part. In 1987 the Arias (or Esquipulas) Peace Plan appeared which, unlike earlier proposals, offered a new playing field on which the revolution could engage. Thanks to a successful defence effort, which included mobilising international solidarity, the United States could not turn a deaf ear on the

plan. For the first time, the negotiation and mediation platform did not take the form of an invitation to surrender. Whatever was to be negotiated, there was no possibility of a return to the pre-1979 structures of oppression.

For us, the military situation was not adverse. In fact, it was evident to most analysts that the US-backed Contras had no possibility of victory. But the war was a tragedy for Nicaragua, it was Nicaraguans who were dying on both sides. The slaughter was becoming more and more senseless. Families and communities were being torn apart, the longer the war endured the more it assumed characteristics of a civil war, with the United States providing a lifeline to surrogates who were largely unaware they were being manipulated.

History shows that almost all conflicts end in negotiation. At first we Sandinistas insisted there could be no direct negotiations with the Contras, but only with the United States. The US was the clear aggressor according to the World Court and international law. But neither law nor morality could deflect the Reagan administration from its belligerent path. The anti-interventionist forces in the US were probably instrumental in blocking plans for a direct US military intervention, but they were unable to stop legal and illegal support for the Contras.

Under these circumstances, the Sandinista leadership was forced to recognise that there could be no outright victory over the Contras. Why? First and foremost because they continued to be backed materially by the US. Second, because the Contras enjoyed a legal territorial haven in Honduras, on the other side of our border. To have hit the Contra camps would have meant an outright attack on Honduras, and certain US retaliation. Third, party and government mistakes in the outlying rural areas and with some ethnic minorities on the Atlantic coast gave the Contras the capacity to develop a social base of support in some regions.

Rather late in the day the Sandinista government came to recognise that, independently of the Contra's Somoza army origins and US lifeline, by 1988 most Contra fighters were teenage peasant fighters. These Contra forces had acquired a more autonomous dynamic which could only be confronted by political means.

The United States and the Contras in this context did not have to "win" the war, they simply had to prolong it so that two other factors came into play. First, the decreasing capacity of the economy to sustain the defence burden, a situation further aggravated by diminishing material support from the old socialist bloc. And secondly, and more important, the exhaustion

suffered by the people. No nation could endure indefinite suffering, an entire generation of Nicaraguans was being killed or maimed. On this basis alone, and from a principled revolutionary perspective, we concluded that the peace efforts had to be stepped up.

Global opportunity, global necessity

There can be no denying that the steady shrinking of economic support from the old Soviet bloc further weakened the Nicaraguan economy. Perestroika, however, also deprived the US Administration of its anti-communist rationale. At the same time, the Reagan Administration was also showing signs of crisis on account of its relentless pursuit of war. A manifestation of this crisis was the outbreak of the so-called Iran-Contra scandal, and growing criticism from Congress.

Under these national and global conditions, peace was both possible and necessary. Crisis had to be turned into opportunity. The important first step was the signing of the Esquipulas or Arias Peace Plan in 1987. Although the US was not a signatory, the pressure of the international community and the attention of the world press made it politically inconvenient for the US or any of the signatories to pull back once the peace process was initiated. Once again, the peace lobby, this time pro-Esquipulas, played a crucial role in the US.

The Nicaraguan government, in particular, calculated that key concessions at the negotiation table would help make it difficult for the Bush Administration to sustain the militarist Reagan approach. At the same time, there could be no doubt that important forces were at work in trying to block a meaningful change in US policy.

Agreement on a broad regional negotiation framework and procedure undermined the hard-line sectors in the US. The benefit however was not without its costs, namely, having to negotiate directly with the Contras and agreeing to a new electoral framework that gave the opposition practically everything it demanded in terms of facilities. Because the Sandinista party was grossly overconfident that it could win a free contest, it did not regard such concessions as a serious danger.

The role of international organisations

Since the parties did not trust each other, it was agreed to call on the United Nations and the Organisation of American States (OAS) to witness agreements and verify compliance. It was, indeed, in Central America that the UN assumed duties previously unknown in history, particularly that of electoral supervision and

monitoring of discussions between governments and their internal oppositions.

Until Nicaragua, for example, never before in the UN's history had an independent country solicited the UN to supervise not only its elections, but the entire electoral process. The UN Observer Force for Central America (ONUCA) was unprecedented in character. At one point, no less than three UN and OAS bodies were operating in Nicaragua; an electoral observer force (ONUVEN); the border inspection force on transnational security concerns (ONUCA) to prevent arms trafficking and other forms of logistical support to insurgencies throughout Central America; and the International Support and Verification Commission (CIAV) of the OAS, to oversee Contra demobilisation and economic reintegration.

In each case, the multilateral presence helped consolidate the confidence of key parties in the process. ONUVEN and the OAS electoral force were seen as indispensable by Mrs Chamorro's coalition, ensuring Sandinista fair play in the electoral process. The Sandinistas, for their part, confident of a victory, believed that ONUVEN would provide the necessary certificate of fair play that could be waved in the face of the US, forcing it to swallow its own rhetoric about democracy. ONUCA had also been demanded originally by the Sandinistas to prevent border incursions from Honduras. The US viewed ONUCA as a useful instrument to stop the alleged use of Nicaraguan territory by the Salvadorean guerrillas. CIAV was intended to facilitate the process of disarming and demobilising the Contras - a process that did not take place until after Mrs Chamorro assumed office. CIAV continues to operate in Nicaragua to this day, mainly attending to the security and material needs of ex-Contras.

Elections and human endurance

The revolution erred by overestimating the capacity of Nicaraguans to endure indefinite suffering. In retrospect, perhaps less lives would have been lost and more votes could have been gained, had greater attention been paid to the signs of war weariness, had there been greater internal democracy within our organisation - in short, had polarisation not blinded leadership to shifting realities and signs of popular exhaustion.

In its campaign programme the FSLN offered peace and economic improvement, but most people perhaps realised that a new Sandinista government could not deliver unless

the US fully respected the results of the election and called off the war. Clearly, this was not going to be the case. The US played electoral politics by funding the electoral opposition, while at the same time sustaining the war and the economic blockade on the country. The message was clear: a vote for the FSLN was a vote for more conflict and deprivation.

In this context, one had to be an idealistic hero to vote for the FSLN. When the vote was counted an amazing 42 percent of the electorate had showed heroic qualities by voting for the FSLN. It became apparent later that many who voted for Mrs Chamorro were not voting against the revolution. Many were sending a signal to the FSLN to cut its losses by removing itself from government, and gaining further democratic legitimacy by doing so.

But 42 percent was not enough to win an election against a coalition glued together by the US embassy. The results did, however, underline that the Sandinista Movement was the strongest and most coherent force within the country. It had taken a revolution to achieve the first ever peaceful transfer of government to the opposition in the entire history of Nicaragua. It had taken a revolution to restore credibility to the electoral process, and to establish firmly that there can be no democracy in Nicaragua without the participation of the FSLN and the people.

For the FSLN the loss of government did not mean the loss of the revolution. In fact, continuing the war even if there had been an FSLN electoral victory, might have undermined even more both past and future potential gains.

The electoral process, the results of the election and the Sandinista decision to respect these were all a product of a successful negotiation process. So too was the ensuing respect of the Chamorro government for the national constitution established by the Sandinistan revolution, and that government's respect for the (largely Sandinistan) national armed forces.

"Lessons" of the Nicaraguan revolution

Elections proved to be only one episode in a longer and continuing transition and negotiation process. In retrospect, the opening of the domestic negotiation process underscored the FSLN's tacit realisation that modifications were required in the revolutionary model in order to reflect a changed balance of forces in Nicaraguan society. Our model was simply too "reductionist" when it came to choosing allies. Our old attitude that "those who are not with us, are against us" had to give way to

"those who are not against us, can be with us."

A change in the balance of forces (from overwhelming popular support for the FSLN, to simple majority support) was, in part, the result of a growing class struggle and of imperialist intervention. But it was also the product of the limitations of our revolutionary model. This model, although pluralistic, provoked unnecessary contradictions and created unnecessary enemies.

Even had the FSLN won the elections, there was no going back to the previous model. Pacification, reconciliation, reconstruction, demilitarisation, loosening of state controls, greater market freedoms, all geared to the national and world political and economic realities, would probably have dominated an FSLN government agenda. For its part, notwithstanding its clear class nature, the Chamorro government is also being obliged, as the FSLN would have been, to seek a minimal consensus in order to achieve governability. This means ongoing negotiations with the FSLN and with Sandinista popular organisations. The latter enter into these in an attempt to establish accords that fully respect the property redistribution and the social programmes of the past decade.

Inevitably the signing of such accords are followed by further negotiations over interpretation and implementation. Once again negotiation continues to be conditioned by the balance of forces and, particularly, by the capacity of mass organisations to sustain pressure on the government through mass action and constant mobilisation. Disarray, division or apathy within the popular camp inevitably means that signed agreements, or the government's pledge to respect the constitution and existing laws, simply become pieces of paper that can be conveniently forgotten.

Much to the despair of the extreme right, the Chamorro government consults with the Sandinista party and shares with it a nominal commitment to reconciliation. But governmental economic programmes are not elaborated democratically or by way of inter-party consultation. Nicaragua's economic programmes are elaborated by the international financial institutions. As a result, the economic situation of the great majority has deteriorated to levels far below those prevailing during the worst periods of the war. Structural adjustment means unemployment and a lack of access to credit, especially for peasants. These factors are, in themselves, a threat to peace in a country where most men and women have access to weapons and know how to use them. The temptation is to

demand economic justice at gun-point.

The Sandinista revolution believed it had destroyed the political, military and economic power of the right in 1979. But the right is attempting to make a modernised comeback — revolution revolutionises the counter-revolution — as the political, military and economic terrains are re-contested. Right-wing political parties, which never disappeared, did manage to pull together the coalition that brought Mrs Chamorro to power. Large financial groups, many never expropriated in the years of the Sandinista government, are now regrouping and pushing for the reconcentration of economic power and property. The Sandinista military and police, although proud of their political origins, are now squeezed in between their political loyalty to the poor on the one hand, and their constitutional allegiance to a government of the rich on the other. On each of these fronts the US stands, characteristically, in the vanguard of the counter-revolutionary effort.

"...revolution revolutionises the counter-revolution..."

Class struggle and imperialist intervention take on new forms, as they also actively adapt to the politics of transition — not in order to achieve transformation, but rather to block it.

What of the capacity of the Nicaraguan people to sustain their transformation effort, in order to ensure that the transition does not go backwards? Partly this depends on leadership and its capacity to sustain the dream of further transformation. This does not mean nostalgia for the past, but rather new creative ways of thinking and doing revolution. Some of the old habits must be set aside, but the ideal must be retained. The dialectic between those old ideals and the new political realities will give birth to new political programmes and new forms of struggle. It may not be possible or even desirable, for instance, that "state power" be captured. Perhaps we need to rethink the reality of the state and the notion of power.

The high level of popular consciousness and organised mobilisation in Nicaragua today is a clear indication that the revolution marches on, from below, where it has always been and where it must never cease to be, regardless of electoral exercises.

It is too early to extract lessons from the ongoing Central American peace process. The outcome in one country will also affect the balance of forces in the others. What is clear from the Nicaraguan example is that peace agreements, transition agreements,

elections and military demobilisation do not automatically translate into stability. Nor is it all a question of the chess-like brain-power of negotiators and mediators. None of the components associated with what the UN terms peace-keeping deals with those factors that led people to take up arms in the first place — economic injustice, land hunger, the need for redistribution. Much to the disappointment of the poor, many peace treaties and negotiations play down the broader economic questions.

An argument can be made about the importance of ensuring political stability and proscribing violence. We cannot deny that the real opening up of the political system to popular forces is something that we have been fighting for. And the very fact of this opening up means that the popular forces acquire a vested interest in stability and in a stable transition.

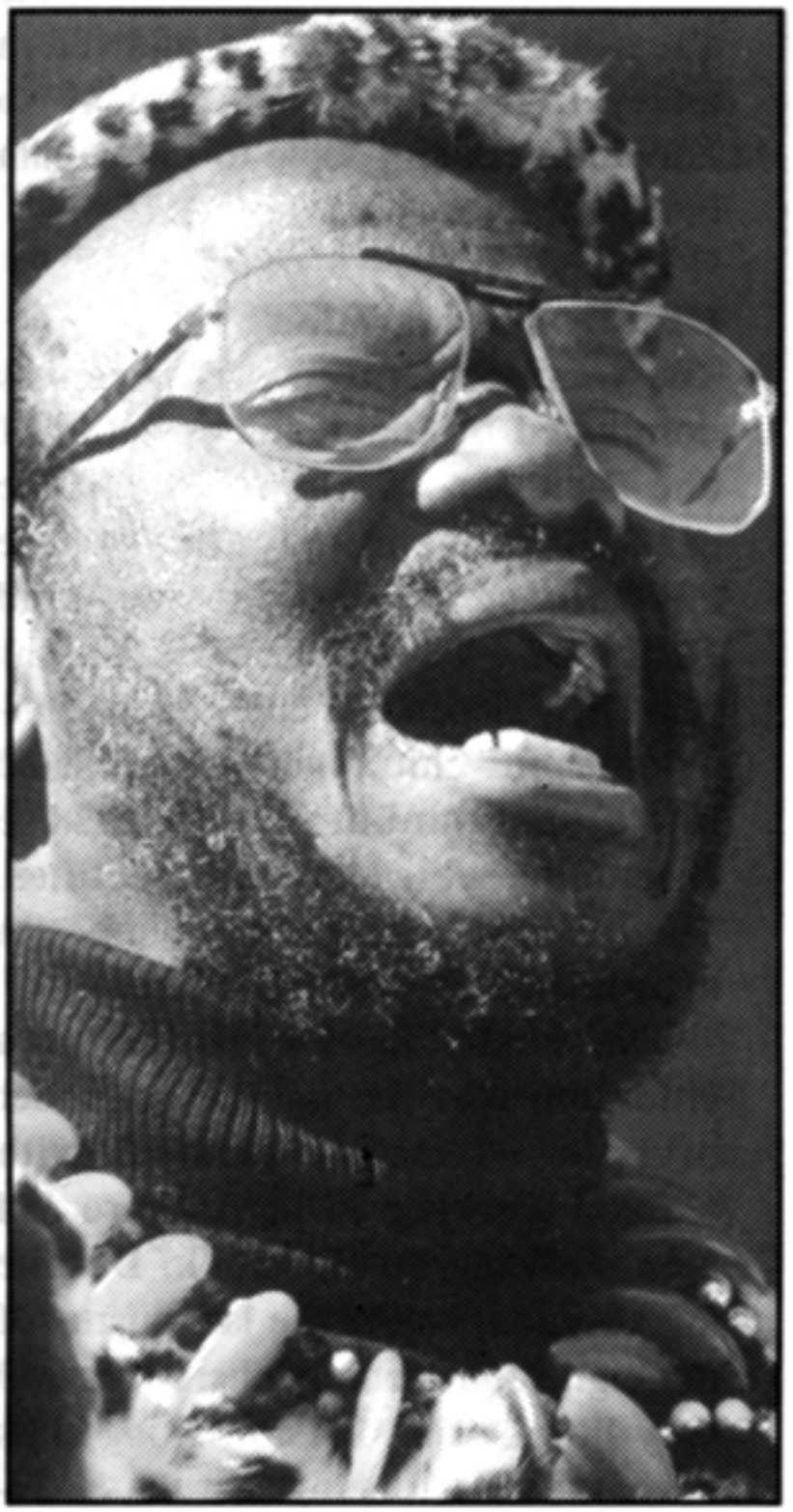
Nevertheless, the popular forces in Nicaragua, as in other countries, cannot agree to the continued economic destabilisation of the people in the name of political stability. We cannot tie the hands of the people in their struggle for jobs or an end to hunger. Peace and stability cannot be mechanically equated with the product of secret understandings among political parties that were former antagonists. Stability will not result from popular interests being traded off in the name of "the greater national interest", or for the sake of reconciliation with unbending minorities. This means that negotiations at the top must also be complemented with negotiations between the trade unions, the social movement, and other mass-based organisations. Only they can guarantee that the agendas do not become predominantly "political", but also take account of economic questions, ensuring the priority of worker rights and popular participation in the discussion of economic issues.

"Stability will not result from popular interests being traded off in the name of the 'the greater national interest', or for the sake of reconciliation with unbending minorities"

In the final analysis, the strategic task of the social movement (the mass democratic movement) is to ensure that party negotiators avoid falling into two traps. On the one hand there is the danger of isolation, of defining your allies too narrowly — workerism. On the other, there is the danger of going so broad that you are hijacked by those who are interested in stability at the expense of thorough-going democratisation.

Buthelezi and the "Zulu Kingdom"

by Cassius Lubisi



IN the late 1970s Chief Gatsha Buthelezi was working very hard to position himself as a national liberation leader in South Africa. With the ANC, SACP and PAC banned, Buthelezi tried to take upon himself the mantle of the liberation movement. He adopted ANC symbols and language as a tactic for building a personal base. He presented the ANC as the "ANC Mission in Exile", and Inkatha as the "ANC Mission in South Africa".

It is interesting in 1993 to read what Buthelezi was saying in those years. In March 1976, for instance, Buthelezi told a Soweto rally that he wanted one South Africa with a single destiny. He only offered a federal option as "a compromise".

While in recent times Buthelezi has been arguing strongly for a semi-autonomous Zulustan, where IsiZulu-speaking people would enjoy what he terms "self-determination", he was mouthing a different language back in

the late 1970s. At the Soweto rally, Buthelezi said:

> *"Beyond any divisions which appear to be present in black society, there is a unity based on deep-rooted black nationalism... There is no Zulu freedom that is distinct from the black man's freedom in South Africa... Black oppression has no ethnic boundaries. We have a common destiny as black people."* (Buthelezi, p.28 and p.33)

But Buthelezi was in for a rude awakening. In 1978, at the funeral of Mangaliso Sobukwe he was booed by angry mourners. His clash with the ANC in London in October 1979 further dashed his aspirations. Buthelezi started switching tracks, and so began the invention of a new mantle. Increasingly Buthelezi set about projecting himself as a Zulu, rather than South African leader, heir to the heroic traditions of an historical Zulu kingdom.

Buthelezi is, of course, currently head of one of the Verwoerdian bantustans – the Natal-located KwaZulu. Some 25 years ago Buthelezi was very forthright about the Verwoerdian origins of this bantustan, today he is much less forthright. Indeed, he wants to make a distinction between KwaZulu and other bantustans. He now argues that KwaZulu pre-dates the Verwoerdian bantustan.

His argument can only convince those who are not familiar with the history of indigenous South Africans. Buthelezi is, indeed, correct when he says there was a Zulu kingdom in the early history of South Africa. The question, however, remains whether Buthelezi's KwaZulu is the same as the Zulu kingdom of old. This is the question I shall seek to answer in analysing Buthelezi's appeal to IsiZulu-speaking people to follow him in his quest for power.

Historical background

The south-eastern tip of Africa was dominated by indigenous polities of one basic kind in the middle of the eighteenth century. These were chiefdoms of various sizes and structures. There were chiefdoms ruled by independent chiefs, and semi-autonomous chiefdoms subordinated by a paramount chief. These chiefdoms were not stable entities. They regularly changed from one form to another, they were indeed fluid.

The basic economic unit of a chiefdom was the *umuzi*. A gender division of labour existed, with women working in agriculture and men working on livestock. Despite this division, before the last quarter of the eighteenth century there was still very little social division along class lines, the reason being that the land –

the major means of production – was held in trust by the chief and distributed fairly equitably among members of the chiefdom.

For various reasons, the last quarter of the eighteenth century saw the increasing centralisation of a number of chiefdoms. Strong chiefdoms with subordinate chiefdoms under them came into being. The three main chiefdoms identified by Wright and Hamilton (1989) were the Mabhudu (east of the Maputo River – now Southern Mozambique), the Ndwande (in the Magudu region – now Natal far north, below the Phongolo River), and the Mthethwa (between the Mhlathuze and lower Mfolozi Rivers).

One of the main instruments of centralisation were the *amabutho*. The *amabutho* were initially age-group units for the purpose of preparing young men for the transition from youth to adulthood. Centralisation brought with it a fundamental change in the *amabutho*. These became more militarised and moved even closer to the control of the paramount chief.

Wright and Hamilton (1989) point out that, by the early nineteenth century, conflict among rival indigenous polities was rife. The one conflict which is more relevant to the present discussion was that between the Mthethwa under Dingiswayo kaJobe, and the Ndwandwe under Zwide kaLanga.

The small chiefdom of the Zulu was part of the Mthethwa chiefdom. When the conflict between the Mthethwa and the Ndwandwe started, the Zulu chiefdom was under the leadership of Shaka kaSenzangakhona. When Zwide attacked and killed Dingiswayo in about 1816, Shaka tactically held his forces in reserve. He then began to build an army with strong discipline and fighting capacity. The Zulu, after defeating the Ndwandwe in a close battle in about 1819, became the most powerful group in the Thukela-Phongolo region. Shaka, increasinly brought many chiefdoms under his direct rule, and thus was built the Zulu kingdom.

The Zulu kingdom

The Zulu in the kingdom that Shaka built between the Thukela and Phongolo Rivers was entirely independent. The Zulu king was the supreme ruler, tightly controlling the processes of production and reproduction. The Zulu under Shaka colonised a number of chiefdoms south of the Thukela. Later Shaka moved his headquarters from kwaBulawayo to kwaDukuza (near Stanger) in 1826. Here he came into contact with British traders who had settled in the southern part of the Mzimkhulu-Phongolo region.

The Zulu kingdom, which only came into being in about 1820, was

divided along class lines. The king, the royal house and important chiefs formed the upper-most stratum of Zulu society, followed by subjects of important chiefs and chiefdoms which formed part of the initial core of the Zulu chiefdom. This second stratum was encouraged to regard themselves as superior to others, calling themselves *amaNtungwa*. The third and lowest stratum were called derogatory names, and their chiefs were not included in decision-making processes in the kingdom.

The Zulu kingdom remained largely the same throughout the rule of Shaka, Dingane, Mpande (all sons of Senzangakhona kaJama) and Cetshwayo kaMpande. The area covered by the kingdom was mainly between the Thukela and the Phongola Rivers.

During this period the Zulu engaged in battles against certain chiefdoms, Boer *trekkers*, and British settlers from Port Natal. Dingane annihilated Piet Retief's delegation before he was defeated by Boers at the Battle of Ncome in 1838. This defeat adversely affected Dingane's capacity to fight and defend his rule. In 1840, a double column offensive by the Boers under Pretorius and the forces of Mpande (Dingane's brother) crushed Dingane's army at Maqongqo (near Magudu). Dingane was forced to flee, and the Boers declared Mpande king of the Zulu.

The Boers attempted to instal themselves as masters over Mpande, but they never succeeded. The Zulu kingdom retained its independence. Mpande's rule was relatively peaceful.

Cetshwayo kaMpande, fighting with his *ibutho – Usuthu –* defeated the forces (*Isigqoza*) of Mpande's favourite son, Mbuyazi at the battle of Ndondakusuka in 1856. With *Usuthu's* victory, Cetshwayo established himself as the rightful heir to the throne. Cetshwayo formally became king when Mpande died in 1872.

The Port Natal settlers had an eye on the Zulu kingdom, which had control over vital trade routes. Coupled with this was internal strife within the kingdom. The Zulu kingdom also had a border dispute with Transvaal Boers. The British, in their mediation between the Zulu and the Boer, set up a Boundary Commission which ultimately supported the Zulu claim.

However, when the British released the finding of this commission to Cetshwayo, they gave him an ultimatum: "demanding not only the payment of fines and the surrender of certain Zulu men to the colonial authorities, but also the abolition of the Zulu military system within thirty days." (Guy, 1979, p.4)

Cetshwayo refused to recognise the ultimatum. The British armed forces

under Chelmsford entered the Zulu kingdom in January 1879 to force Cetshwayo to abide by the terms of the ultimatum. The British suffered what was to be one of their most humbling defeats at the battle of Isandlwana.

The British were joined by Hamu kaNzibe, chief of the Ngenetsheni chiefdom. Bolstered by reinforcements, Chelmsford attacked *Usuthu* at Cetshwayo's headquarters in Ondini. The Zulu were defeated and Cethswayo's headquarters burnt down. Cetshwayo fled to the Ngome forests, where he was later captured by the British. He was led into exile at the Cape Town castle.

End of the kingdom

This was the beginning of the end of the Shakan Zulu kingdom. The British divided the kingdom into thirteen chiefdoms to be ruled by British-appointed chiefs. Among these chiefs were a white trader John Dunn, Hamu and another chief of Zulu royal lineage, Zibhebhu kaMaphitha of the Mandlakazi.

Although remnants of *Usuthu* refused to toe the British line, the British had effectively turned the clock back to the era before Shaka built the Zulu kingdom. By default, the British planted seeds for a civil war involving the Zibhebhu/Hamu axis and the Cetshwayo-supporting Usuthu axis.

Although the king was re-installed after he led a delegation to Queen Victoria in Britain (1882), he was to rule only over a strip of land between the Mhlathuze, the upper reaches of the Phongolo and the lower reaches of the Black Mfolozi.

All the 1879 appointed chiefs were deposed, except for Zibhebhu who was closely working with the British. Zibhebhu, realising the organisational weaknesses of *Usuthu*, launched regular attacks. The most ruthless of these attacks was on Ondini in July 1883.

According to Guy: "If one has to find an historical moment to mark the end of the old Zulu order, then it is this Mandlakazi attack on the royal homestead on 21 July 1883 when Zibhebhu succeeded where Chelmsford had failed in July 1879. The British commander had left the political hierarchy of Zululand virtually untouched: Zibhebhu decimated the Zulu leadership, killing the great men of the country upon whose authority *Usuthu* dominance depended.' (p.167)

Cetshwayo died shortly after this defeat. Even Dinizulu who succeeded his father, Cetshwayo, to the throne, could not stem the tide of the destruction of the Zulu kingdom. Most of the formerly Zulu-held land was given to white settlers after the creation of British Zululand in 1887.

The barren tracts of land occupied by Zulu and other African indigenous people were called a `Native Reserve'.

Zulu kings from Dinizulu on were largely ceremonial, because they had been stripped of the last vestiges of Shakan power. The king himself became a subject of the Governor of Natal in his capacity as Supreme Chief. In effect, the Zulu kingdom existed for a mere sixty years. Zulu royalists continued, however, to show allegiance to the king, but merely for ritualistic reasons.

Buthelezi's claims are flawed

Buthelezi's attempts to adorn himself with the mantle of the Zulu kingdom are flawed in many ways. In the first place, glorification of some timeless and monolithic Zulu kingdom is far from representing reality. Serious tensions and conflicts have been rife between the royal house and its subjects on the one hand, and among members of the royal house on the other.

Talk of Zulu secession is reckless, not only for all the people of South Africa, but also for the IsiZulu-speaking people themselves. As already noted, the Zulu kingdom was created through the forcible subjugation of a number of independent chiefdoms. What stops the Ndwandwe, the Mthethwa, Qwabe, Ngcobo, Mkhize, Hlubi and others from seceding from the Zulu?

In terms of legitimacy, territory and continuity, the Buthelezian KwaZulu is not the Zulu Kingdom, it is largely based on a colonially created Native Reserve.

Buthelezi is (or was) well aware of this. However, he now finds it useful to mislead people who are not well informed about South African history.

That he was once aware of the illegitimate origins of his homeland is well illustrated by statements he was making in the late 1970s. Speaking at the Soweto rally in March 1976 he said:

> *"I challenge anyone to prove to me that the majority of blacks want the so-called independence which is offered to our* ***reserves now called 'homelands'.*** *"* (***my emphasis***) (Buthelezi 1979, p.28)

Speaking to Kajuitraad, an Afrikaner grouping, at Ezimbokodweni in April 1976, Buthelezi shed more light on the subject:

> *"It has always struck me that the Afrikaans press never bothers to cover events in KwaZulu, not even the proceedings of the KwaZulu Legislative Assembly,* ***an Afrikaner creation.*** *"* ***(my emphasis)*** (Buthelezi p.44)

Not only does Buthelezi know that KwaZulu is not synonymous with the Zulu kingdom, he is also aware that the Zulu kingdom was destroyed by,

among others, the British. In April 1978 he said in Johannesburg:

"The KwaZulu (sic) King Cetshwayo was provoked into an unjust war by Sir Bartle Frere...The ultimate end of these evil designs was ***the Zulu nation of the last century lost its sovereignty*** *with its conquest by the British in 1879."* ***(my emphasis)*** (Buthelezi, p.118)

But Buthelezi's present attempts to invest himself in the aura of a long disappeared Zulu kingdom are even more outrageous. The reinvention of history goes further than the attempt to transform a Native Reserve into a Kingdom.

"Heriditary Prime Minister"

According to the Inkatha mouthpiece, the ***Clarion Call***:

"The leaders of the Buthelezi clan, the largest in the Zulu nation, have been Prime Ministers to a succession of Zulu Kings. As such Chief Buthelezi is the traditional Prime Minister of the seven million Zulu nation and the senior advisor to His Majesty the King of the Zulus."

These claims are absolutely spurious. As Mzala points out:

"The premier chief during the reign of King Shaka was Ngomane, who remained Shaka's 'Prime Minister' long after the death of Shaka's mother, Nandi. ***Ngomane was not a Buthelezi but a Mthethwa.*** *Then came King Dingane, whose premier chief was Ndlela kaSompisi.* ***He too was not a Buthelezi but an Ntuli.*** *After King Dingane, the kingdom was led by King Mpande, who appointed Masiphula kaMamba as the premier chief.* ***His surname was Ntshangase and not Buthelezi.*** *It was only when Cetshwayo was king of the Zulus that a Buthelezi featured – Chief Mnyamana. Cetshwayo was the last king of the sovereign Zulu kingdom as founded by King Shaka, and before it was divided into various chiefdoms by the British.*

"But even as a tradition it fails, because no Buthelezi other than Gatsha has held such a position. When Dinizulu took over as king after Cetshwayo, he appointed Mankulumana as his premier chief. Mankulumana kaSomaphunga, a direct descendent of Zwide, was a Ndwandwe (also known as Nxumalo, ***not a Buthelezi."*** **(emphases mine)** (Mzala 1988, p.105)

Switching mantles

Buthelezi, then, has switched mantles between the 1970s and the present. These switches have everything to do with his waning political fortunes. But it is important to note that these switches are usually a question of emphasis. Although he has been

forced back into regionalism and "Zulu" ethnicism, Buthelezi has not abandoned his national ambitions. These ambivalences are also partly due to the fact that Buthelezi's base within KwaZulu itself is insecure and eroding.

His continued national aspirations are also due to the fact that the region for which he wishes to declare UDI (as opposed to the old Zulu kingdom) has no economic viability of its own. IsiZulu-speaking people have for a long time been integrated into South African production processes to an extent that, on their own, they will not survive economically.

In the past months, the man who claimed to be the leader of the "ANC at home", the man who aspires to bathe himself in the aura of an heroic Zulu kingdom has made one more adjustment. With one foot in regionalism he has located the other foot in the only national base that remains available. He has aligned himself with the most reactionary, white racist forces in our country. But therein lies another story.

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Heat, light and civil society

Another rejoinder to Nzimande and Sikhosana

by Mzwanele Mayekiso

A year ago, the last instalment of my debate with cdes Nzimande and Sikhosana (in *African Communist* no.130) provided more heat and less light. It was also at a time I was leaving for a period of community economic development training in the US. In the context of the present "independent working class political party" debate, it is timely to again reflect on working class civil society.

I have addressed the working class debate specifically in another intervention (see *Work in Progress*, Sept/Oct 1993), so let me say simply that we should rapidly go beyond debating whether a new workers' party should be formed, when we already have a popular and open-minded party – the SACP – which fits the bill. The main question that we should be debating is how SACP leadership and activists will take up a clear, independent programme that coincides with the programmes and campaigns of the progressive organs of civil society.

To this end, it is encouraging to be party to such healthy, dynamic and prolific polemics on state, party and civil society in this transition period. The challenge for the SACP is to transform its present membership of high quantity, into a highly trained membership of quality. My opponents Nzimande and Sikhosana, among others, are scholars who deeply care about fitting local circumstances into the long and proud tradition of socialist theory, and they will play a leading role in this transformation.

In addition to reviewing the classics, we are all engaged in the

struggle over ideas based on our different views of what is actually happening at the grassroots. Under conditions that are always shifting, this is the way it should be, as opposed to getting our political ideas just through dogmatic line-giving or personality cults. I hope this spirit continues to grow in the *African Communist.*

First, some of the personal attacks by Nzimande and Sikhosana – I have supposedly appended the phrase "working class" to a "liberal" use of "civil society" in order to give it "revolutionary respectability" – and that "either Gramsci was not a Marxist or Mayekiso is not" (p.70). (This claim immediately follows N&S's position that Gramsci did not "understand 'civil society' to be *only* super-structural." But I never said he did take that view, and in my article – *AC* 129, p.34 – I explicitly cited Quentin Hoare to show that Gramsci's flexibility with the concept of civil society in this respect!)

But I should not worry too much here, because, as Friedrich Engels in *The Housing Question* said, "I am not going to quarrel about the tone of my criticism. When one has been so long in the movement as I have, one develops a fairly thick skin against the attacks and therefore one easily presumes the existence of the same in others." So, I am no liberal, but if it makes N&S feel better to use insults instead of tight argumentation, maybe that is understandable.

"The main question that we should be debating is how SACP leadership and activists will take up a clear, independent programme that coincides with the programmes and campaigns of the progressive organs of civil society ..."

A more telling flaw is a crucial internal contradiction in the way N&S criticise me for allegedly suggesting that "civil society can be owned by one particular class" (p.71) I never do. My position is obviously that the terrain of civil society must in future, still prior to socialism, be increasingly *biased* towards the working-class. On the other hand, they say that "civil society is primarily, under capitalist society, in the service of the bourgeoisie" (p.65). To me the phrase "working-class civil society" is a simple way to describe that *part* of the wider civil society which must gain hegemony.

Even if N&S misinterpret the idea of working-class civil society, there is no question that we have differences, I see these in two ways:

1. real differences over the degree of independence of working-class organs of civil society (trade unions, civics, etc.) in the current conjuncture, understanding that the interim government will come under severe pressure to serve the bourgeoisie; and

2. mainly semantic differences over the degree to which the Marxist classics support a political project of building these organs (as part of the fundamental transformation of capitalist society).

On the second point, there is no problem with certain additions to the debate stemming from N&S, such as their eloquent historical analysis of civil society in the transition from feudalism to capitalism (pp.66–7). Nevertheless, simply because "'civil society' emerged out of the bourgeois revolutions as a precondition for the consolidation of capital accumulation," as N&S correctly state (p67), does not mean that civil society must *always* serve accumulation.

You can understand this if you simply substitute "the proletariat" for "civil society" in their sentence. If we use the logic of N&S, then because the proletariat is a class which capitalism founded to serve the process of accumulation, *we should simply ignore it as a concept to be utilised in the struggle for socialism.* My point here is to show the absurdity of the semantic dispute that N&S have initiated.

Did Marx and Lenin not talk of capitalism creating its own grave-digger (the proletariat)? Can that proletarian grave-digger not gain sustenance from its own social organs in civil society, and thereby – while still on the long road to smashing the capitalist state – can the proletariat not consolidate *its* own position vis-a-vis the accumulation process? Can we not use such social organs – and here I think the civics can be very important alongside trade unions – to start developing new relations of

"... it is time for new direction in the debate which examines with the actual role of working-class representatives, on the shop-floor and in the community, with respect to unfolding democratic processes"

production, as it were, in the womb of the decaying mode of capitalist production? I can say yes to all these questions!

N&S forget the very basic point of dialectical materialists, which is that capitalism always throws up contradictions as it unfolds through history, and our task as socialists is to be creative about using whatever contradictions (including the emergence of trade unions which are essentially reformist organisations) to build an ever stronger working-class.

What this means is: instead of being consistently honest about the desire to see working-class organs subservient to a given political party – which their 1991 *Mayibuye* article did not hide – *N&S now play a verbal shell game that dodges the main issue.*

What are these main issues? They are about what a government of national unity will do when progressive public servants demand wage increases, when the World Bank and IMF insist on the restructuring of the economy in capitalist interests, when civics demand development resources, when police are called in by the bosses to bust strikes, when the ideological apparatus of apartheid-capitalism (especially the SABC) remains protected turf for racist civil servants, etc.

These are tough questions, but they have been implicit (sometimes explicit, such as *AC* 129, p.40) in all my writing on this topic to date. And they are the questions that every trade union, civic, and other representative of the working-class will stare in the face in coming months. But instead of answering such questions forthrightly, N&S resort to dismissing the concept of civil society, as if that also simply dismisses the future contradictions we will encounter.

In conclusion, as with N&S, I believe Marx provides the essential tools for analysis. But since I have shown in my previous *AC* article that "civil society" is a contested terrain whose character is dependent upon particular conditions at a given time, there is little point in beating this dead horse. Let's sit down and eat the meat! In other words, it is time for new direction in the debate to examine the unfolding democratic processes, with the actual involvement of working-class representatives, on the shop-floor and in the community. Not just in theory, but in practice. Are we ready to go in this direction, comrades? ☭

SA to go it alone economically? – too simplistic

The analysis of Michael Tanzer and Idrian Resnick ("Towards a socialist economy: observations from abroad", *African Communist*, 1st quarter, 1993) is far too simplistic. The problems of the South African economy, devastated by apartheid, run deep and create serious constraints on what will be possible. It would be nice if more imports, desperately needed for effective infrastructural development, could be substituted by cheap locally produced goods. It would be nice if growing black consumption could be directed to purchasing only local produce. It would perhaps be nice, in the eyes of some, if it were possible to avoid a mixed economy with its horrible profit motive, and go straight to instant, full-blooded, state-controlled socialism.

Nice, but not practical. Economies of scale are too dominating. Local consumers want foreign goods, domestic industry needs effective (foreign) machinery to produce cheaply. Import substitution possibilities have already been practically exhausted. The suggestion by Tanzer and Resnick that South Africa can afford to ignore foreign capital and turn "inward"to go it alone is, therefore, just not on. South Africa is already a relatively open economy. The capital and skills base which apartheid has created is woefully inadequate for domestic development needs. The political situation and the condition of the state, with its hostile civil service, makes mass nationalisation unrealistic as the democratic movement has indicated - and why should domestic capital, which will also demands heavy returns, be any more acceptable to workers than foreign investment? The appalling poverty, under which victims of apartheid are living now, makes a

mockery of suggestions that workers, especially the unemployed, will "decide to save the bulk of South Africa's natural resources for future generations."

The simplistic thinking of Tanzer and Resnick is in danger of masking a genuine message of warning which international solidarity can perhaps offer to South Africans. South Africa should not expect massive foreign investment from a post-cold war, capital scarce world, when not even domestic money is being mobilised. Yet this is not a reason for being sycophantic about relations with potential foreign investors. If the fundamentals are right to invest, then private investors will tolerate an expectation that they should take wider stakeholders, including employees and the community, more seriously in the South African context. Indeed, investors would welcome a healthy and skilled labour force and properly developed infrastructure.

Promises of massive instant assistance from international financial institutions, like the World Bank, as soon as the democratic movement agrees to lift sanctions, should be treated with caution. But there is a store of goodwill and a democratising South Africa will have international friends who can help provide the space to negotiate your own indigenous macro-economic solutions to the unique South African problems with such institutions.

There are international insights to offer, but there is also a rich vein of South African economic analysis which is looking at these questions. The work of the Macro-Economic Research Group (MERG) is of crucial importance in assessing just what will be possible and we look forward with great interest to the results of the latest stage of its research. International solidarity is best directed towards supporting those South African economists, like Alex Erwin, seeking credible solutions to the unique and enormous problems created by the evil apartheid system. Confident voices within the democratic movement calling for progressive economic policies will need friends to counter Western arrogance.

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